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New York

President:	Mr. van Walsum	(Netherlands)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Mársico
	Bahrain	Mr. Buallay
	Brazil	Mr. Cordeiro
	Canada	Mr. Fowler
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	France	Mr. Teixeira da Silva
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara-Moussotsi
	Gambia	Mr. Faal
	Malaysia	Mr. Mohammad Kamal
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Slovenia	Mr. Türk
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Richmond
	United States of America	Mr. Burleigh

Agenda

The situation in Africa

Progress report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (S/1999/1008)

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The meeting was resumed at 2.15 p.m.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Finland. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Rasi (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia — and the associated countries, Cyprus and Malta, as well the European Free Trade Association country member of the European Economic Area, Iceland, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union welcomes the Secretary-General's progress report (S/1999/1008) on the implementation of the recommendations contained in his report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

The Council's debate today on Africa takes place at a very critical moment. The European Union welcomes this initiative and the opportunity to focus on Africa. On the one hand, we are able to observe some signs of political and socio-economic progress; on the other hand, more than a third of African countries are at present or have recently been involved in armed conflicts. The European Union is deeply concerned by the extension of armed conflicts, the huge influx of arms and military equipment and the increasing role of non-State actors in armed conflicts. As a consequence, parts of Africa are suffering the massive displacement of civilian populations and humanitarian crises. The prospects of development and prosperity in the countries directly or indirectly affected by these conflicts have been shattered by current developments.

Peace, security, sustainable development, human rights and good governance are interdependent. Crises are triggered by a range of factors, including social, ethnic or religious strife, the violation of human rights, poverty, the inequitable distribution of and the fight for economic resources and commodities, environmental degradation and large-scale migration. The European Union is of the view that the combination of these factors in Africa poses a serious challenge to the international community.

The primary responsibility for the future of Africa rests with the African nations themselves. The use of force is not conducive to lasting peace and security. Power without responsibility, rule without accountability and force without control are not acceptable. It is indispensable to set in motion a process to achieve democracy, power-sharing and respect for human rights, whether this process takes the form of promoting broad-based governments and maintaining the rule of law and effective civil service, or of securing the legitimacy of elections and the orderly change of governments. African nations need to have prospects for and a vision of their future in a global context. Broad dialogues on continental and subregional security, relying on existing regional cooperative arrangements, should be encouraged.

The international community, including the European Union, cannot be indifferent to events in Africa. The European Union is strongly committed to the primary role of the United Nations in the maintenance and promotion of international peace. The European Union welcomes the renewed commitment of the Security Council to contribute to conflict resolution in Africa. It notes the Council's determination to improve further its ability to prevent conflicts and to make its responses to conflicts more efficient and effective. The European Union looks forward to further Security Council activity in this regard. We commend the work of the Secretary-General and United Nations bodies in their efforts to bring about solutions to crises in Africa.

At the same time, we need to strengthen the United Nations capacity for conflict prevention and to address the root causes of conflict. Potential sources of conflict need to be addressed at an early stage. The changing nature of conflicts requires new immediate responses. We could quote numerous examples to illustrate the fact that international humanitarian law and human rights continue to be violated with impunity in many parts of Africa, as a result of either a combination of brutality and ignorance or of systematic and organized action.

The European Union considers the safe and unimpeded access of international humanitarian organizations to refugees, displaced persons and vulnerable populations in conflict situations to be a fundamental principle. We strongly condemn the arbitrary denial of these rights. The overwhelming majority of casualties in today's conflicts in Africa are civilian, the majority of them women and children. In this context, the European Union calls upon all States and parties to conflicts in Africa to stop the recruitment and the use of child soldiers. It is essential to bring to justice those responsible for violations and to end the culture of impunity. In this context, we underline the importance of the effective operation of the international criminal

tribunals, especially the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and the need for other appropriate mechanisms to deal effectively with questions of impunity and accountability. The European Union underlines the importance of the early establishment of the International Criminal Court and calls upon all States that have not done so to sign and ratify the Rome Statute without delay.

We commend efforts of African leaders and States and regional and subregional organizations, in particular the Organization of African Unity (OAU), to resolve conflicts by peaceful means. Under its Common Position on conflict prevention and resolution in Africa, the European Union is ready to assist in building capacities for conflict prevention in Africa, particularly through the OAU and African subregional organizations. We also recognize the importance of regional peacekeeping efforts in Africa and express our support for measures to develop African capacity in this regard.

In its 50-year history of peacekeeping, the United Nations has deployed more operations in Africa than in any other single region. These operations remain a vital instrument in assisting African States to resolve conflicts with the help of the international community and to create the conditions for peaceful development. United Nations-mandated peacekeeping operations can make the difference between peace and war and lay the foundation for further peace-building. The European Union is convinced that progress, lasting peace and sustainable development will be reached in Africa only if Africa, as well as the international community, can muster firm political determination and commitment.

For the European Union, Africa's sustainable development is a priority. The commitment of the European Union to Africa is based on shared interests, values and objectives. We wish to help Africa to achieve peace and stability in order to improve the quality of life of its people. An enabling political environment conducive to human rights, good governance and a vibrant civil society are essential for sustainable development. In this respect, development cooperation has to play an important role.

The European Union is the world's leading source of development assistance to Africa, providing more than two thirds of total official development assistance flows to sub-Saharan Africa. Development assistance plays a key role in supporting the policies pursued by the African countries. This is particularly the case in the least developed countries, three quarters of which are in Africa. Donors and African countries share responsibility for ensuring that development assistance is used effectively. The European Union is currently negotiating the renewal of the Lomé Convention, our present partnership with the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. The challenge is to put European Union political, trade and economic cooperation on a new footing to cope with the scale of poverty, social and political instability and the effects of globalization. For the European Union, an active development policy with the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries is an important component of the Union's global responsibility. We are actively committed to improving the operational coordination of development cooperation amongst ourselves, with partner Governments and other international development actors, such as the United Nations family.

External debt continues to be a serious impediment to sustainable development in many African countries. Unless the external debt is reduced to sustainable levels, especially for the poorest countries, the benefits of reform risk being swallowed up by increased debt servicing. The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt (HIPC) Initiative provides a major opportunity for achieving debt sustainability and should be speedily extended to more countries within the terms agreed upon. We welcome the progress recently achieved at the Cologne economic Summit, including the recognition that the central purpose of debt relief is poverty reduction. The 1999 Cologne debt initiative is designed to provide deeper, broader and faster relief through major changes to the HIPC framework.

We welcome the favourable response of the OAU to the European Union's proposal for the holding in April 2000 of a summit of the heads of State and Government of the European Union and of Africa. We look forward to starting the preparation for the summit, which should adopt a balanced approach between political and economic issues, reflecting the global nature of European Union-Africa partnership in order to ensure concrete results.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica, His Excellency The Honourable Seymour Mullings, MP. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mullings (Jamaica): My delegation joins with others in expressing our appreciation to you, Sir, and the members of the Council for holding this open debate on

Africa. For Jamaica, the continent of Africa holds a special significance, given our close historical and cultural ties. Indeed, over 80 per cent of the Jamaican population is of African descent. Jamaica has been in solidarity with the cause of Africa in its struggle for freedom and now in its search for a lasting peace.

The report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization has emphasized that the general security situation in Africa continues to cause the gravest concern and we are all well aware that African issues dominate the work of the Security Council. The questions which are now being raised relate to the effectiveness of the Council's efforts in dealing with the pressing concerns and how creative the approaches have been in dealing with the different arenas of conflict.

Africa needs more than just words of sympathy and concern from the international community, particularly the Security Council. We clearly need a programme to be implemented on a sustained basis to help end the cycle of conflict. We have to begin by tackling the fundamental causes in order to achieve long-term results.

The Secretary-General's report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace in Africa (S/1998/318) and its follow-up progress report (S/1999/1008) give sound analysis of the causes of conflict in Africa and make practical recommendations on how to address the problems which persist. We appreciate the Secretary-General's efforts over the past year to act on the recommendations contained in the report (S/1998/318), which include support for regional and subregional initiatives in the area of conflict prevention; establishment of an international mechanism to assist host governments in maintaining the security and neutrality of refugee camps; and strengthening the effectiveness of arms sanctions regimes imposed by the Security Council.

We remain concerned, however, that more concrete action needs to be taken by the Security Council in relation to conflict situations in Africa. The Council should be aware that there is a growing perception of foot-dragging in the way it authorizes peacekeeping forces for conflict areas in Africa — more attention is given and resources are diverted to other parts of the world.

The report also highlights efforts made by the United Nations in supporting African peacekeeping. While one welcomes the convening of seminars and the conduct of training courses, we believe that further provision could be made to provide logistic and financial support for enhancing African peacekeeping capacity. We call upon the international community not to turn a blind eye to Africa's present crisis, but to rally to its assistance.

Jamaica remains fully committed to the belief that collective action is the best approach to addressing the complex situation which now obtains and wishes to place on record its appreciation of the efforts of regional organizations, such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which have made significant contributions to the restoration of peace and democracy in Africa.

We note with appreciation also the efforts of the Organization of African Unity in the situation in the Great Lakes region and hope that the Lusaka Agreement will form the basis for reconciliation and peace. Nevertheless, the Security Council should not abdicate its role in the maintenance of international peace and security but should continue to work in close cooperation with regional organizations, in a coordinated manner, to promote mediation and negotiations between contending parties.

The proliferation of small arms in Africa is a troubling issue. As was reflected by most speakers during last week's Security Council debate on small arms, there is an urgent need to halt the illicit manufacture, transfer, trade and use of small arms.

The economic and social development of Africa remains an area of priority. We note that despite Africa's rich endowments, economic growth has continued to elude most countries. This has manifested itself in soaring levels of unemployment, in debt and in deteriorating standards of living.

Jamaica welcomes the heavily indebted poor countries debt initiative at the G-8 meeting in Cologne this year aimed at alleviating the debt of 11 sub-Saharan African countries. It is our hope that this will be the start of a more concerted move to eliminate Africa's debt. We are pleased to note that the current meetings of the World Bank in Washington are considering this.

Jamaica is fully convinced that there is no place for "Africa fatigue" or "Africa pessimism". We owe it to Africa to ensure that it realizes its full potential. As we enter the twenty-first century, let us redouble our commitment to the rebirth of Africa, where peace,

security and development will be a reality. Africa's survival is the concern of the entire international community and affects us all.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement now.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, allow me at the outset to express to you my warmest thanks and my appreciation for your presiding over this very important meeting and we hope it will contribute to speeding up the Council's examination of African problems, beginning with its responsibility towards the maintenance of international peace and security under the United Nations Charter.

Our meeting coincides with the issuance of the progress report of the Secretary-General (S/1999/1008) on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (S/1998/318). What is of interest here is that the Secretary-General presented a progress report which, like his earlier report, contains entire chapters that do not fall within the competence of the Security Council. However, the progress report is addressed only to the Council, whereas the first report was submitted to both the Council and the General Assembly and was also considered by the Economic and Social Council. We wonder why the same approach has not been adopted in this particular case.

In this context, allow me to recall Egypt's ongoing position that we must distinguish between the competence of the Council and the competence of the other organs of the United Nations under the Charter. We recall also the need for the Council to take into account the delicate balances between the decision-making bodies of the Organization under the Charter, and above all the role of the General Assembly, in studying the principles of cooperation in alleviating human suffering, examining the causes of conflict and strengthening durable peace and sustainable development. This is not to mention the competences of other United Nations bodies responsible for these issues. We are pleased that the Council is studying the problems of Africa and the means for finding solutions to them, as these problems violate or threaten international peace and security.

In the last few years, African countries have shown more willingness and determination to confront the challenges facing them at the dawn of the twenty-first century, and their desire to assume their collective responsibility for maintaining peace and security in the continent and for playing the crucial role that they must play in settling disputes in their own territory. This willingness and determination were demonstrated at the thirty-fifth OAU Summit in Algiers in July 1999 and in the resolutions and declarations adopted there.

That OAU and the subregional organizations are fulfilling a more important role in finding solutions to African disputes does not relieve the United Nations and the Security Council of their primary responsibilities: those organizations cannot replace the United Nations or the Security Council in the settlement of disputes. Hence, the importance of a greater and more effective movement by the Council towards translating these responsibilities into practical measures to deal with the growing impression among African heads of State, as reflected in their statements to the General Assembly, that the United Nations seems to attach greater importance to problems that arise in other parts of the world, to the detriment of Africa's conflict issues. We welcome the positive measures adopted by the Council in its follow-up to the Secretary-General's report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (S/1999/1008), and its implementation of such recommendations as fall within its competence.

We observe, nevertheless, that there is some hesitation, even foot-dragging, by the Council in assuming its responsibilities to take the necessary steps at the proper time to avoid an escalation of these conflicts in Africa, ensure the stability of States, achieve progress and establish peace. These issues deserve greater attention from the Council on strengthening the various frameworks for settlements between parties in contention.

We cannot mention the situation in Africa without expressing our deep concern and dismay at the deteriorating situation in the Horn of Africa. The tragedy that befell Somalia and its people over eight years ago continues with no measure by or direction from the Council to put an end to it. Whereas we stress that the responsibility for finding a peaceful settlement to the Somali crisis lies with the Somalis themselves, we do feel that the Council should act more forcefully to find a solution that would preserve Somalia's territorial integrity, maintain its sovereignty and achieve national reconciliation so that it can take its place once more within the community of nations.

The Council should not be content with pious sentiments in support of the international and regional efforts of the various States and organizations in the region which are involved. In this connection, we hope that the Secretary-General's report on Somalia of 16 August 1999 (S/1999/882), which many parties in Somalia have welcomed, will contribute to motivating the Security Council to fulfil its mandate within the context of the Somali crisis, especially in respect of the embargo on arms deliveries under its resolution 733 (1992).

At the same time, Egypt feels that the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, with its endless loss of life and destruction of property, has lasted too long. We think it is high time to put an end to this conflict, and we hope that the Security Council will carry out its responsibility to help resolve this conflict through the parties' implementing the Agreement which they signed under OAU auspices.

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the most serious challenges that Africa faces on the eve of the twenty-first century. This is a conflict where the armies of six African countries are involved. It has led to the displacement of more than 700,000 people. Despite the many complex dimensions of this conflict, the countries concerned have managed to come to a Ceasefire Agreement to put an end to it. Although we welcome Security Council resolution 1258 (1999) to send up to 90 liaison officers to this region we urge the Council to adopt measures to strengthen the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement by mandating a military observer mission to be followed by the establishment and deployment of a large-scale peacekeeping operation.

With respect to the situation in Sierra Leone, the Security Council should step up its efforts to help achieve peace in this fraternal country.

We hope that the Council will keep in mind the recommendation contained in the final report of the Secretary-General for a broader peace operation in order to implement the Lomé Accord, which would restore the credibility of the Council in resolving problems in that region.

Egypt, like many other African countries, is committed to assuming its responsibilities by contributing to the resolution of conflicts in Africa. We participate by contributing armed forces, military observers or police officers to the United Nations peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone, Western Sahara and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as in the Central African Republic, where the Egyptian army forms the backbone of the United Nations force in that country.

Egypt also takes part in operations outside Africa — in Kosovo, Bosnia, East Timor and other regions of the world. Our participation stems from the conviction that the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security is a collective responsibility, which should not be left to a particular continent or a particular geographic region, such as Africa, which would assume the responsibilities for resolving their own conflicts.

As a result, we hope that the Council will have a similar conviction and will adopt similar measures to resolve conflicts in Africa, in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter.

In this context, allow me finally to recall what the Secretary-General told us in his report with respect to the causes of conflict in Africa and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in that continent. He said that today the international community must adopt concrete measures, because declarations and pious wishes are not enough to measure up to the actions that the international community must take in Africa in order to resolve its problems.

The President: I thank the representative of Egypt for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Portugal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Monteiro (Portugal): Portugal associates itself with the statement made by Finland on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. President, my delegation congratulates you on organizing this important meeting. The fact that we have had this debate for three years in a row shows how the United Nations is committed to dealing with persistent concerns of conflict and development in Africa.

The report (S/1998/318) that the Secretary-General submitted to the Security Council in April 1998 contains an exhaustive and detailed analysis of the causes of the conflicts that plague the African continent. But of equal or perhaps even greater importance than the diagnosis he offers are the concrete proposals he makes with a view to eliminating or relieving those causes and thereby opening the way towards a process of sustainable development in

Africa. We should now turn from our process of reflection towards developing a programme of decisive action.

Portugal has consistently advocated that the international community would be committing a grave error of judgement if, in the face of the crises and difficulties that persist in Africa, it were to allow itself to fall into indifference. We should heed the wise words of the Secretary-General yesterday, at the beginning of this important debate, when he warned against "Africa fatigue" and "Afro-pessimism".

By helping Africa to solve its problems, we are at the same time helping the international community, since it is in its vital interest that societies be freer and more democratic, that human rights be respected and that economies prosper. A more stable and developed Africa leads to a richer and safer world for all humanity.

That reality requires that we develop with Africa a closer and more dynamic cooperation in a joint task with its peoples and Governments. The international community can and should help Africa, but Africans themselves must also assume fully their destiny and responsibilities in the construction of a better future.

In this regard, we would like to single out the remarkable efforts of Mozambique in achieving a smooth transition from war to peace and for being now on the road to a better future for its people.

National reconciliation is also being pursued in Guinea-Bissau, with the assistance of the United Nations, and we would like wholeheartedly to commend this effort.

In meeting its fundamental responsibility for guaranteeing international peace and security, including in Africa, the Security Council should, whenever possible, act in strict coordination with African regional organizations, as it is doing in Sierra Leone.

Furthermore, it is unrealistic to hope or to demand that the United Nations provide quick and full solutions to the conflicts in Africa if the belligerent parties themselves — and those who directly or indirectly support them — are unwilling to show the necessary political will to abide by the agreements that they have signed. It is useless to pretend that the international community can, in any situation, make up for a non-existent political will and impose peace on those who deliberately choose war. The expectations of what the international community can and should do must, therefore, be realistic and adapted to circumstances.

It is also worrying that, while the international community is accused of showing a lesser interest in, or commitment to, resolving African conflicts than those elsewhere, the decisions of the Security Council that have been taken and that seek to guarantee peace are openly flouted.

In the case of the conflict in Angola, for example, the United Nations has dedicated significant human and material resources in the search for a negotiated solution. But, so far, to no avail. We are now faced with reports of persistent violations of the sanctions imposed by the Security Council on UNITA that sought to prevent that movement from acquiring the weapons that would allow it to continue the war. In this way, UNITA is not only in violation of Security Council resolutions, but also of the "Acordos de Paz" and the Lusaka Protocol it signed of its own free will. Portugal fully supports the determination expressed yesterday by the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, to promote efforts aimed at putting an end to what he called the bleeding and destruction that are taking place in Angola, essentially due to the intransigence of the UNITA leadership.

There is undeniable proof that those States that practise good governance and respect democracy, the principles of the rule of law and human rights enjoy incomparably higher levels of stability, development and well-being than those States under authoritarian regimes that violate or defend a limited and restricted concept of human rights.

Now we should also pursue the process of reflection started by the Secretary-General in his speech before the General Assembly last week on how the United Nations should respond to situations of crisis that threaten the basic values inherent to human dignity. In this context, we need only recall what occurred in Rwanda.

On the economic front, Africa should not merely be an exporter of raw materials for the more developed countries, thereby remaining on the margins of the trend towards the new economic globalization. Africa must be fully integrated into the world economy in parity with and competitive with the more developed regions; otherwise, existing developmental delays will only worsen. This will more readily succeed with the continued and deepened process of regional integration in

Africa, which, by its very nature, will reduce the risk of political instability among States and create at the same time more attractive markets for foreign investment.

The reduction of the debt of African countries is a fundamental element for their economic development, since this will free the resources necessary for development projects and programmes — resources that would otherwise be consigned to servicing that debt. However, the reduction or forgiveness of debt should be accompanied on the part of debtor countries by solid macroeconomic reforms and policies that eliminate existing distortions by way of a rigorous and transparent management of the funds made available.

We believe that what is needed now is a candid dialogue in the international community on the best way to tackle the challenges faced by Africa. Portugal has sought to work together with its African partners in the development of a close and mutually beneficial relationship between Europe and Africa. In this context, the planned Cairo summit of the European Union and Africa, which is expected to be held next April, represents an important opportunity to expand and deepen this dialogue. Portugal believes that this summit will be an important contribution to placing on a firmer footing the long-term relationship between Europe and Africa.

The President: I thank the representative of Portugal for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Indonesia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Haryono (Indonesia): The delegation of Indonesia wishes to express its appreciation to you, Mr. President, and to the other members of the Security Council for convening this meeting at a critical juncture for the continent of Africa.

As in the past, we welcome the initiatives taken by the Security Council to consider issues of importance in the format of an open debate, including the current debate on the situation in Africa. We remain confident that this openness and transparency will also be seen in the near future in the Council's main discussion on the maintenance of international peace and security. We continue to believe that such practices are essential in stimulating new ideas and approaches and in resolving the numerous issues on its agenda.

Our deliberations today reflect the continuing significance that the international community accords to the issues concerning Africa, particularly those relating to security and socio-economic development.

Let me take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his progress report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. It provides a unique opportunity to take stock of the significant achievements and progress made by the people of Africa and, concurrently, to focus attention on the need for enhanced international cooperation for the establishment of a partnership in the continent with the rest of the world based on mutual benefit and prosperity.

Africa today stands at the threshold of the next millennium closer to attaining its goals of stable peace and economic prosperity. It is gratifying to note that the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and subregional organizations in Africa are playing an increasingly important role in the resolution of conflicts. These endeavours were bolstered by the appointment of special envoys, representatives and contact groups and by the holding of special conferences whose task it was to examine the sources of conflict and to recommend practical solutions.

Thus the Lomé Peace Agreement on Sierra Leone, the OAU Framework Agreement on the conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia and the ceasefire agreement for the Democratic Republic of the Congo demonstrate the determination of these countries to seek solutions to their problems, and the resolve of regional and subregional organizations to assume primary responsibility for the resolution of conflicts. They also show the indispensable role that the United Nations can play in facilitating the attainment of these objectives, especially in peacekeeping.

Notwithstanding its inherent difficulties, peacekeeping remains a vital component in assisting African States to resolve conflicts. Therefore, cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in enhancing and strengthening African capacity for peacekeeping — particularly in the areas of training, dissemination of information, civilian police and logistical support — remains crucial. It is worth noting that, while the reinforcement of the African countries' capacity in peacekeeping is a priority, it should not relieve the Security Council of its obligation under the Charter for the maintenance of peace and security, nor

does it constitute grounds for discouragement or disengagement.

The Secretary-General's progress report also touches upon the need to reinforce the ongoing debate on targeted sanctions, with particular reference to arms embargoes and violation regarding arms trafficking. As a follow-up, we look forward to the detailed recommendations.

My delegation shares the concern of African States caused by the illicit and covert arms trade, involving a circuitous network of manufacturers, buyers, suppliers and distributors, often operating outside the control of State authorities. The easy availability of weapons and munitions has been a disincentive to the peaceful political settlements that are sorely overdue in many protracted cases of civil strife in which civilians have become targets. On the other hand, it is important to recognize that civil wars are not entirely an internal phenomenon, as weapons to fight such conflicts often originate from external sources.

Numerous initiatives taken in Africa have not only promoted a greater understanding of the consequences of illicit arms flow, but have also developed a strategy for addressing the scope and approaches that may be envisioned on an issue that is admittedly complex. These include addressing the root causes of conflicts and non-interference in areas of tension by States in pursuit of specific interests. We are gratified to note that several African countries have taken steps in this regard. The resumption of debate last week on these and related issues by the Security Council was both timely and appropriate in raising consciousness on the causes and global consequences of the unchecked flow of illegal arms.

The struggle to bring about peace and security in Africa is intrinsically linked with economic growth and development. We fully agree with the Secretary-General's statement in his progress report that conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building are meaningless unless they enable a society to develop. For years the promotion of peace and development in Africa has been a major concern of the international community. This is manifest by the vast numbers of initiatives launched by the United Nations and other organizations. The stakes are high — a whole continent yearns to lift itself out of underdevelopment and poverty and in many cases to overcome social and ethnic tensions and conflicts. Absolute poverty, which still afflicts 44 per cent of the population of the continent as a whole, with 51 per cent of those people living in the sub-Saharan countries, is unacceptable. Likewise, more must be done for the approximately three-quarters of all people infected by the HIV/AIDS virus who now live in Africa.

The past decade has been a mixed one, with, at times, virtual economic stagnation and at others significant progress. Africa still faces horrendous development constraints. In this context, the Secretary-General's report made recommendations on a number of critical core issues on which progress must be achieved. While some efforts have shown results, others, such as the endeavour to increase market access for African exports, including of the developed countries, in the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and of the Lomé Convention, still need to be pursued.

Likewise, financial flows for development to Africa have been negatively affected by globalization, particularly regarding multilateral financial flows. Since only a very small percentage of foreign direct investment flows to Africa, many African countries that are unable to tap into such flows have become increasingly marginalized.

Closely associated with appropriate development financing, and an unbearable constraint on revitalizing African growth and development, is external indebtedness. Despite the many initiatives undertaken, particularly the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative, Africa's debt stock continues to increase. In this regard, we look forward to the implementation of the recent Köln debt initiative, adopted by the Group of 8 in June this year, as a significant step towards cutting the debt burden of some of the world's poorest.

Debt relief and cancellations, while critically needed, represent only one of a number of major requirements within the integrated framework approach necessary to ensure sustained growth and sustainable development. Indonesia therefore supports the call from the OAU for an international agreement to clear the debt stock of the poorest countries in Africa. This would represent an important step in the effort to revitalize the economic performance of these countries and put them back on the path of development. Likewise, we see merit in the proposal for creditor countries to convert into grants the remaining official bilateral debt of the poorest African countries.

As stated in the report of the Secretary-General, Africa today reveals a remarkable combination of accomplishments and unresolved problems, of opportunities seized and chances missed. In the

endeavour to overcome the problems of Africa, the countries of the region and continent cannot act by themselves. A wider concrete participation of the international community is definitely necessary.

In this context, we would like to add that if the international community, just recently, was able to act in a concerted and comprehensive manner to resolve an issue which had received so much global attention, we firmly believe that if the same concerted and comprehensive approach were applied to Africa, it would surely resolve many of the major problems facing that continent.

Finally, in the context of the new dialogue and relationship between the international community and the African continent, Indonesia — following the example it set back in 1955, in Bandung, which contributed to the birth of the Non-Aligned Movement — is still firmly committed to assisting its partners in Africa in achieving their vision of a peaceful and prosperous Africa. That support has been consistently reflected in Indonesia's support of Africa's objectives; through our active participation in many international and regional forums, including our participation in various peacekeeping operations and South-South cooperation; and also through the strong bilateral relations that Indonesia maintains throughout the continent.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the Republic of Korea. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Lee See-young (Republic of Korea): Mr. President, I would like first of all to extend our appreciation to you for taking the very successful initiative of organizing this open debate on the important issue of the situation in Africa. We highly commend the Netherlands' contribution to the promotion of transparency in the work of the Security Council, as demonstrated by its initiatives of having organized already two open briefings and now the second open debate this month. I would also like to pay my tribute to Prime Minister Wim Kok for his leadership.

My delegation is also grateful to the Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, for his comprehensive and timely progress report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in his Africa report of April last year and for his insightful statement yesterday morning.

Mr. President, as we debate the situation in Africa today, I would like to echo the positive note struck by your Foreign Minister last week in his address to the General Assembly:

> "Africa is not a land of troubles only but of happiness as well, not a continent of catastrophe only but equally one of hope." *(A/54/PV.13)*

Indeed, this continent of hope is experiencing significant positive changes on many fronts. In two key African States, South Africa and Nigeria, we have witnessed the swearing-in of democratically elected leaders, a development that should generate momentum for democratic forces across the African continent. These two new leaders, President Mbeki of South Africa and President Obasanjo of Nigeria, together with many other African leaders, strongly advocated before the General Assembly last week the importance of democratic good governance as a foundation for peace and development in Africa. We also appreciate the able leadership of President Bouteflika of Algeria, the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and of Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, OAU Secretary General. Their role continues to be indispensable in promoting peace and development in Africa.

Important progress has also been made recently in some of the most intractable conflict situations in Africa, including the Peace Agreement in Sierra Leone, the Ceasefire Agreement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the electoral transition under way in the Central African Republic. I am reminded that just a few days ago, President Chiluba of Zambia made an eloquent statement to the Security Council on the Lusaka process for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which he has mediated with tremendous energy and commitment. We believe that the international community must work hard, together with African leaders, to sustain this hard-won momentum for true peace and stability in those regions.

Against this backdrop, the Secretary-General has submitted his report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in his report on Africa. My delegation notes with appreciation that, since the issuance of his comprehensive report on Africa, the whole United Nations system, under the leadership of the Secretary-General, and of the Security Council in particular, has taken various follow-up decisions to address many aspects of the challenges Africa faces today. My delegation fully agrees with Secretary-General Kofi Annan that the problems facing Africa require a comprehensive approach, integrating security, political and socio-

economic dimensions. We believe that this holistic approach is possible only in the context of the United Nations system, with the full support of the African countries and the international community as a whole.

Having said that, allow me to touch upon several points which, in our view, require the priority attention of the Security Council. First, my delegation wishes to highlight the importance of conflict prevention in Africa. Given the many potential contingencies in Africa, there is an urgent need to build up the capacity to prevent conflicts through early warning and early action. We believe that the establishment of post-conflict peace-building support structures in Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and other countries, as aptly described in the Secretary-General's progress report, has set a good example applicable to conflict prevention in these and other potential conflict areas.

We also believe that the Secretary-General's Trust Fund for Preventive Action has served, and will continue to serve, as a useful vehicle to enhance the capabilities of the United Nations for conflict prevention in Africa and elsewhere. My Government has contributed annually to the Trust Fund since its inception in 1997, and will shortly announce its additional contributions for this year. We welcome the decision announced earlier by the United Kingdom to contribute to the Fund. We call upon all other Member States that have not done so to make their financial resources available to the Fund in order to enable the Secretary-General to expand his initiatives for preventive action in potential conflict areas in Africa and elsewhere.

Secondly, we believe that rapid response is crucial to containing deadly conflict and alleviating human suffering. Further efforts should be made by African countries themselves to build and enhance their own peacekeeping capacity. On the other hand, we also support the various measures undertaken by the United Nations to upgrade Africa's peacekeeping capacity, including such measures as staff-exchange programmes between the United Nations and the OAU; the United Nations-led training assistance for African peacekeepers; and the coordination with the Economic Community of West African States. However, we share the concern expressed by the Secretary-General over how to provide logistic support to African troops involved in peacekeeping operations in the early stages of conflicts. We consider it necessary to explore the possibility of establishing a stand-by arrangement for such logistic support.

Thirdly, my delegation joins others in emphasizing once again the importance of controlling the flow of arms in Africa, which has often fuelled the conflicts there. In the Council's open debate last week, we heard insightful statements from the Council members, including those of many Foreign Ministers, on how to bring the proliferation of small arms under control, particularly in Africa. We reiterate the belief that arms embargoes should be imposed and strictly implemented in all conflict situations. Furthermore, with cross-border arms flows rampant, country-specific arms embargoes may not suffice to stem illicit arms trafficking, thus requiring cooperation at the regional level. In this connection, we support the efforts made by the Secretariat to encourage African States to adopt national legislation making the violation of Security Council arms embargoes a criminal offence.

Fourthly, we take note from the progress report of the continuing efforts made by the Secretariat and the Security Council to refine the use of sanctions in Africa. While we recognize the difficulty in the real world of achieving "smart sanctions", we believe that there is a recurring need to minimize the collateral — though unintended — human suffering, through the imposition of more specifically targeted sanctions and periodic review mechanisms. In this connection, we commend Ambassador Fowler of Canada, Chairman of the Angola sanctions Committee, for his valuable efforts in tracking not only the illegal diamond trade and oil sales, but also illicit arms trafficking by UNITA forces. I wish him and the Committee all the best in their important endeavour.

Fifthly, we have witnessed the ramifications of the failure to ensure the security and humanitarian character of refugee camps in some conflict situations, most notably in the Great Lakes region of Africa. We appreciate the successful campaigns undertaken by the United Nations system to relocate refugee populations to safe areas away from conflict zones in such countries as Guinea, Liberia and Chad. My delegation also commends the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, under the leadership of Madam Ogata, for having assisted many African countries in strengthening their police and other law-enforcement structures that handle security in refugee camps.

Last but not least, we share the Secretary-General's conviction that democratic good governance and sustainable development are fundamental for long-term peace and prosperity in Africa. The experience we acquired in our own development process illustrates that

good governance, based on democracy and respect for human rights and supported by free-market principles, better ensures peace, stability and prosperity in the long run. We note with appreciation the numerous achievements already made in these fields in Africa, as described in the Secretary-General's report. The international community should continue to work closely with African countries with a view to further enhancing their capacity for good governance and sustainable development.

My Government has always accorded high priority to the promotion of friendly ties, cooperation, solidarity and partnership with African countries. The Republic of Korea dispatched peacekeepers to Somalia, Angola and Western Sahara and joined electoral assistance missions in South Africa and Mozambique. We have consistently strengthened our cooperation with Africa in the field of development, including human resources capacity-building. Our relationship with Africa became even greater during our recent two-year service as a member of the Security Council. My delegation takes this opportunity to reaffirm the commitment and readiness of my Government to continue to make contributions to the collective efforts of the United Nations, the OAU and African countries for peace and development in Africa.

The President: I thank the representative of the Republic of Korea for the kind words he addressed to my delegation.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Belgium. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Adam (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I wish first to congratulate the delegation of the Netherlands on the excellent manner in which it has been carrying out the duties of the presidency this month, particularly through the endeavours of the Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Mr. Kok.

I associate myself with the statement made by the delegation of Finland as President of the European Union, especially with respect to the progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. Moreover, I fully subscribe to the views expressed by Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and by the representative of Algeria, on behalf of the current Chairman of the OAU.

Let me take this opportunity to explain my country's approach and aims with regard to Africa, and more specifically with regard to Central Africa and the Great Lakes region. The Vice-Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, Mr. Louis Michel spoke in the General Assembly last week of the need for a more active and more generous policy towards the African continent, which has suffered so greatly; he even proposed that the fifty-fourth session of the Assembly should be held under the banner of Africa.

The Security Council too must demonstrate vision and shoulder its responsibility to restore peace in a continent which today has by far the world's largest number of victims of conflict — dead, wounded, missing, refugees, displaced persons and the victims of anti-personnel landmine — not to mention endemic diseases such as AIDS, malaria and sleeping sickness, which are an unprecedented scourge of the continent and which it is even more difficult to combat when the countries they affect are involved in war.

The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement has aroused great hope. Now it must be implemented, and we would be very concerned by any delay or prevarication. This means that the parties concerned should demonstrate the political will to solve the root problems of the present conflict, and should seek lasting solutions throughout the region. To encourage and support them, the international community must make a considerable effort; here the Security Council must be a driving force.

The point is not to find ad hoc solutions to individual problems. In some regions of Africa, despair is so great that many see no prospects for improving their lot other than through armed struggle. We must change that way of thinking by showing that only peace can bring happiness and prosperity: peace, and certainly not military victories that bring illusory gains at the cost of untold suffering.

We therefore believe that peace should be complemented by a partnership pact setting out specific commitments in the economic, financial and social areas. Such a pact would mobilize donor countries and international financial institutions and their resources as well as recipient countries. Belgium will make its contribution and will step up its direct contacts, its cooperation and its financial support.

History has forged special links between my country and that region, along with responsibilities which my

country intends to shoulder in a responsible and consistent manner, as Mr. Michel said last week. Belgium has the capacity to do this. My country has a reserve of men and women with experience of Central Africa, its customs, its languages and its economy. Our institutes of agronomy have acquired great expertise in tropical agriculture and animal husbandry, and the Antwerp Institute of Tropical Medicine has a well-deserved reputation worldwide. Those are only some examples of the kind of potential that Belgium can place at the service of Africa.

Africa must help us help Africa, for if the world's good intentions are to be effective in benefitting that continent, African leaders too must work to create a context for the peace and good governance that are necessary for development. Financial and technical cooperation can exist only in a climate that ensures its effectiveness. Cooperation cannot be based on giving partners the benefit of the doubt: it develops and flourishes in a climate of predictability and stability.

The President: I thank the representative of Belgium for the kind words he addressed to my delegation.

The next speaker is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Satoh (Japan): At the outset, Sir, I should like to express my sincere appreciation to you for convening, for the fourth time this month, an open debate of the Security Council. I wish also to welcome the Secretary-General's progress report on Africa which was issued last Saturday, and to thank the Secretary-General for the statement he delivered yesterday morning.

Although the purpose of this meeting is to consider the seemingly intractable problems confronting African countries, I would like first to note some positive developments that have taken place in Africa in recent years. The importance of Africa in the international community cannot be overstated, and the progress we are witnessing in Africa in development, democratization and regional cooperation is indeed reassuring to the entire international community. In the course of this past year alone, for example, we have seen the transition to a civilian regime in Nigeria, the holding for the second time of democratic elections in South Africa, and the successful presidential election held in Algeria.

I would also like to note the peace agreement that was signed in Lomé between the Government of Sierra Leone and the rebel group, the Revolutionary United Front, and the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement between the Government and rebel groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. There are also hopeful signs of progress towards a settlement of the border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea. And on the economic front, many African countries have registered annual gross domestic product growth rates of well over 5 per cent during the course of this decade.

We also need to recognize the admirable activities which regional organizations have been undertaking in order to advance the cause of peace and prosperity in Africa. The roles that the Economic Community of West African States and the Southern African Development Community have been playing in maintaining security and promoting economic development in the western and southern African regions are crucially important and highly commendable. It is also encouraging that the Organization of African Unity (OAU) summit, held in Algeria this July under the leadership of President Bouteflika in his capacity as Chairman of the OAU, attracted the participation of an unprecedented number of heads of State or Government. Having attended the summit as head of Japan's observer mission, I witnessed and admired a new dynamism that is emerging in Africa.

While we are encouraged by these positive developments, the fact remains that many countries in Africa are faced with difficult obstacles as they struggle to achieve political stability and to pursue economic and social development. Of the most immediate concern are grinding poverty and the recurrence of conflicts, which have resulted in 8 million refugees and displaced persons. Unless these problems are resolved, prospects for international stability and prosperity in the new millennium will not be promising.

As underlined by the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, poverty and conflict are interrelated. Indeed, in many regions of the continent we are witnessing a vicious circle in which poverty is exacerbated by frequent conflicts at the same time that poverty itself is one of the causes of the occurrence and recurrence of conflict. Hence, poverty is an issue which should be our primary focus now and in the twenty-first century, with the United Nations, other international organizations, States and civil society coordinating their efforts towards its alleviation.

The Tokyo Agenda for Action adopted at the Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD II), which Japan co-hosted with the United Nations last October, calls for a combination of efforts and cooperation to cope with the questions of poverty and conflict. These include increased efforts by African countries themselves, cooperation among African countries, developed countries and international organizations and cooperation between Asia and Africa. The TICAD process has already entered the implementation stage. Last month Japan co-hosted, with the Government of Kenya, the United Nations Development Programme and the International Monetary Fund, a seminar on debt management, and Japan has established, with the cooperation of the Government of Malaysia, the Asia-Africa Investment and Technology Promotion Centre in Kuala Lumpur for the purpose of facilitating flows of investment and trade information with regard to Africa. Japan is also planning to hold four subregional review conferences in Africa by the end of the year 2000 with the aim of further promoting implementation of the Tokyo Agenda for Action.

Debt is the most serious issue facing many African countries. Japan, for its part, has been contributing to the alleviation of debt problems by rescheduling debts and extending grant aid for debt relief, and will make further efforts to address this difficult problem by implementing the commitment it made at the G-7 summit meeting in Cologne in June. Japan is also determined to continue to extend effective, efficient and high-quality official development assistance to African countries, despite its domestic budgetary difficulties, while at the same time strengthening its cooperation with the various bodies and agencies of the United Nations.

In conflict prevention, my Government has long advocated a comprehensive approach which embraces conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building, post-conflict reconstruction and development, the establishment of good governance and the elimination of potential causes of conflict, most particularly poverty.

With regard to the issues of peacekeeping and peace-building, we believe that the roles of regional organizations such as OAU and the Economic Community of West African States, must be strengthened further. Close cooperation between those regional organizations and the United Nations is without a doubt crucial to maximizing international efforts to bring peace to the troubled countries. With this in mind, the Japanese Government has been making financial contributions to the OAU Peace Fund.

On the issue of small arms, to which Japan gives the highest priority, we strongly hope that the General Assembly will adopt, during this session, a resolution endorsing the report of the Secretary-General prepared with the assistance of the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms (A/54/258). Japan also intends to contribute to the success of the international conference on the illicit arms trade in all its aspects, which is to be held no later than 2001.

We also regard it as a matter of high priority to extend assistance to landmine victims, many of whom are children. In December 1997, Japan announced the Zero Victims Programme and pledged financial support of approximately $80 million for mine clearance and victim assistance during the subsequent five-year period. To date, Japan's contributions amount to about $45 million.

Post-conflict reconstruction and development is another important area in which international cooperation is required. Among many other issues involved, the reintegration of ex-combatants, particularly children abused as soldiers, should be given high priority, for the success of this process is the key to preventing the recurrence of conflicts.

The Government of Japan, for its part, is prepared to support all the aspects of post-conflict reconstruction and development, ranging from the rehabilitation of refugees and displaced persons to the reintegration of ex-combatants, to the restoration of damaged lives and to the reconstruction and development of the economies of the countries concerned. In this context, I would stress that field activities to cope with humanitarian emergencies, which often start before the fighting ends, should be well coordinated with other activities related to reconstruction and development.

There is no doubt that African countries, with their tremendous potential, can become important partners in the global efforts for peace and prosperity. We sincerely hope that the Security Council will continue to apply its experience, expertise and wisdom to the resolution of Africa's problems.

Japan is advocating that the international community should place a more distinct focus on human security as we enter the next millennium. Poverty and conflict are two major threats to human security in Africa. In other

words, freedom from poverty and conflict is essential in order to enhance human security in Africa. Recognizing this, Japan will continue to work for the betterment of conditions in Africa, with implementation of the TICAD process as the central means towards that end.

The President: I thank the representative of Japan for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mwamba Kapanga (*spoke in French*): The current meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Africa is an initiative of the Government and of the representative of the Netherlands, President of the Council for the month of September. Allow me, first of all, to express my delegation's warmest congratulations and our gratitude for this praiseworthy initiative.

Like the others who have spoken before me, my delegation would like to tell the Secretary-General that it greatly appreciates the report (S/1999/1008) that he presented on the situation in Africa, which sheds much-awaited light on the subject of our statements here. The Democratic Republic of the Congo also notes the wish expressed by various speakers on the necessary cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which must take root and be improved if we want to deal effectively and in a concerted manner with the many security problems that impose enormous and undeserved suffering on the African States.

As the head of our delegation, Mr. Yerodia Abdoulaye Ndombasi, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, said in his statement yesterday in the general debate of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been experiencing an armed aggression since 2 August 1998 described by the Secretary-General of OAU as pointless and senseless. This aggression is forcing enormous sacrifices on the innocent people of my country, whether they reside in free areas or in occupied provinces.

My delegation does not wish here to go back over this shameful, senseless war of aggression, whose notorious history is known to you all. The suffering and destitution that it is imposing on our people, already bruised by three decades of civil chaos and poverty, should provoke universal revulsion and lead the international community to lend all its weight to putting an end to this quickly: the credibility of the United Nations depends on it.

Although we are the victim of this unjustified aggression, from the very beginning of this war the Democratic Republic of the Congo has nevertheless sought peace. This is why it has attended all the meetings organized in Africa and elsewhere in the world to discuss a negotiated end to it. The Rwandan and Ugandan aggressors, however, were conspicuous by their absence at most of these meetings, or used delaying tactics to prolong their occupation of our territory.

As you know, Mr. President, on 10 July 1999, following very difficult negotiations conducted by President Chiluba under the aegis of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Organization of African Unity, the heads of State of the six countries involved in this war of aggression signed in Lusaka, Zambia, the Ceasefire Agreement for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, commonly called the Lusaka Agreement. Practical modalities and a specific timetable for implementation of the Agreement are annexed to it and form an integral part of it.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo attaches particular importance to the implementation and success of the Lusaka Agreement, which states the need to find solutions to the security concerns of the Democratic Republic of the Congo as well as those of its neighbours. This concern has already been expressed by my Government by organizing in May 1998 the conference on solidarity and development in the Great Lakes region, a conference that was unfortunately sabotaged by those now attacking us.

My Government reaffirmed this concern within the framework of the Lusaka Agreement, in accepting the establishment of a mechanism to disarm militias and armed groups found in our territory. The Agreement also urges the countries of origin of the members of these armed groups to commit themselves to taking all the necessary steps to facilitate their repatriation. The assistance of the United Nations in this process is very much needed. In giving such assistance, the world Organization would help to prevent aggressor countries from finding a new pretext to attack the Democratic Republic of the Congo again once their troops have been withdrawn from Congolese territory and their withdrawal has been verified.

I categorically deny the false allegations made here and the nonsense spoken by the Rwandan delegation, to the effect that the Interahamwe militias had been integrated into the Congolese armed forces. Until 2 August 1998 the Congolese armed forces were led by senior Rwandan officers, who were incapable of flushing out the least of the Interahamwe. Since then the Rwandans have occupied the north-eastern part of our territory, through which the Interahamwe have supposedly passed in order to attack Rwanda. Thus far the Rwandans have not produced a single Interahamwe militia member, dead or alive.

To return to the Lusaka Agreement, I would like to draw the Council's attention to the fact that, as during the negotiations, immediately after the signing of the Agreement the aggressors resumed their diversionary tactics in order to delay its implementation as long as possible.

Due to an alleged dispute over the leadership of the so-called rebels, we had to wait 51 days — until 31 August 1999 — for them to sign the Agreement with the support of their sponsors, since Presidents Museveni of Uganda and President Bizimungu of Rwanda, in person, announced the news of the signing to their peers in SADC, meeting at the SADC summit in Maputo, Mozambique.

Since then nothing stipulated in the Agreement has been implemented. Rather, the aggressors are using the Agreement as an excuse to prolong indefinitely their presence on our territory. The Joint Military Commission remains a dead letter, despite the appointment of its Chairman, because the so-called rebels have still not chosen their representatives and the necessary funds have yet to be released. The inter-Congolese national dialogue has still not begun, and the question of choosing facilitators has yet to be resolved, since the aggressors have yet to follow up on my Government's proposals. Nor has any withdrawal of troops to defensive positions been observed.

Defying the truce called for by the Secretary-General for the national vaccination days Rwandan and Ugandan troops carried out a fratricidal war on our territory, in Kisangani. A great deal of infrastructure was completely destroyed and 3 million doses of polio and smallpox vaccine were lost, threatening our children with lifelong disabilities. But the Democratic Republic of the Congo condemns above all the death of more than a hundred innocent Congolese victims in Kisangani. The town will for ever mourn their deaths.

Despite the signing of the Lusaka Agreement by all the parties, the Rwandans and Ugandans continue to mass troops, military equipment and heavy weapons around the mining towns of our country, such as Mbuji-Mayi, Beni and Butembo. They continue to appoint governors of provinces. They even raise customs barriers within provinces they occupy, link these provinces and their cities, establish and use air connections, and so forth, thus carrying out their wicked intention of partitioning our territory. All these activities are taking place under the eyes and within earshot of the international community. The United Nations and the OAU — which are parties to the Agreement, and whose charters are obviously being violated — making the slightest protest, even though, by resolutions 1234 (1999) and 1258 (1999), the Security Council reaffirmed the need to respect the territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

How can we explain to our African populations this new source of despair, involving their being daily discriminated against and marginalized by international institutions, in political, humanitarian, economic and military interventions?

The Council knows full well the costs to the international community of the humanitarian intervention to aid European refugees, from Bosnia and Kosovo, with those incurred to help African refugees, from Somalia, Sierra Leone, the Sudan, Angola or the Democratic Republic of the Congo. There is no need to point out the speed with which decisions have been taken to intervene to end conflicts in Europe, Asia or the Middle East; the dazzling speed at which enormous financial, material and human resources are assembled; and the precision with which the missions of the forces are defined, within the framework of Chapter VII of the Charter.

How can we not note strongly and with indignation that when it is a question of an African conflict the Security Council cannot decide, or does so haltingly? It often cites budgetary reasons for not being able to mobilize the necessary financial, material and human resources. It discharges its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security by entrusting it to the OAU, which must both come up with the necessary resources and define the missions of hypothetical buffer forces.

Finally, the Council is aware that, in Europe, Asia or the Middle East the deployment of United Nations forces ends only after a political solution imposes on the

warring parties respect for the relevant provision of the Charter of the United Nations. In Africa, on the other hand, the tragedies in Somalia and Angola — to mention only those two — show that the deployment and hasty withdrawal of United Nations forces allows situations to worsen and exacerbates conflicts.

In describing this situation, far be it from my delegation to cast aspersions on our world Organization. Prominent world figures, such as the President of the French Republic, Mr. Jacques Chirac, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mrs. Sadako Ogata, have recently and on various occasions raised this issue in order to draw the international community's attention to this glaring and unbearable injustice.

Thus, my delegation reaches out to such Africans as the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General to tell them that the peoples, nations and countries of Africa cannot understand how, under their shared mandate, Africa remains the unbeloved wallflower of the Security Council with respect to the settlement of armed conflicts. They have the important and noble task of sounding the alarm to wake the United Nations from its stupor, so that the goal of peace and harmony does not remain for our peoples, nations and countries a mere dream, which, as everyone knows, is the guardian of sleep.

By Security Council resolution 1234 (1999), unanimously adopted on 9 April 1999, the United Nations clearly established that the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a victim of its neighbours' aggression. Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi are thus in clear violation of the United Nations Charter, which every Member is called on to respect and defend. The Government of my country takes note of Security Council resolution 1258 (1999) of 6 August 1999.

My delegation wishes to reiterate the words of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who writes in his report S/1999/790:

> "The conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has inflicted further terrible suffering on a country already heavily burdened with poverty and neglect. An estimated 700,000 persons are displaced within the country, in addition to some 300,000 refugees located on its territory... The conflict has been characterized by appalling, widespread and systematic human rights violations, including mass killings, ethnic cleansing, rape and the destruction of property... The international community and the United Nations should therefore do everything in their power to assist the Congolese Government, parties and people, as well as the other Governments involved, in achieving a peaceful solution." (*S/1999/790, paras. 13-14*)

My Government makes a solemn and emotional appeal to the entire international community in general, and to the Security Council in particular, inviting them to become fully involved in the immediate implementation of the Lusaka Agreement so as to put an end to the untold suffering of my people. The Security Council must, first, exert firm political pressure on the aggressors to respect the ceasefire and to compel them to withdraw their troops and arms from Congolese territory and to go home; secondly, proceed to the rapid and massive deployment of United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and thirdly, assist in the rapid organization and successful convening of inter-Congolese political negotiations.

My delegation should like to conclude by saying quite simply that a Congolese national is no different from a national of Kosovo or East Timor. He has a head, eyes, arms, legs, hair. Like the national of Kosovo or East Timor, the Congolese national is a human being. He, too, has the right to life; he, too, has the right to expect his fundamental rights to be respected. The colour of his skin does not make him a sub-human being. When the international community feels that certain reprehensible acts are unacceptable in this waning century, it is obliged and duty-bound to prevent them from being committed and perpetuated in my country.

The President: I thank the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for his kind words addressed to my delegation.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Morocco. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Snoussi (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): It is a real pleasure for us to participate in this special meeting of the Security Council to address the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict in Africa. My delegation takes this opportunity to welcome the efforts of the United Nations, led by Secretary-General Kofi Annan, to ensure that the international community is ever

mindful of the serious situation and tragedies of the African continent.

What can we add to what was said last year, since peace remains precarious and economic and social development in Africa is encountering increasingly insurmountable obstacles? Indeed, the general situation on the continent is extremely disturbing, despite the various attempts of the international community to relaunch economic growth and development. We refer, *inter alia*, to the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa, the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa and the Tokyo Conference, whose promoters we commend.

As the Secretary-General properly emphasizes in his report before the Council,

> "There are... places where the widely held view of Africa as a region in perpetual crisis is not just an image but an all-too-grim and painful reality". (*S/1999/1008, para. 96*)

It is very difficult, unfortunately, to ignore the excessive arms purchases, the bad governance, the AIDS epidemic, the corruption, the impediments to trade and the foreign debt burden that continue to hinder the development process of many African countries. Thus, 44 per cent of Africans, and 51 per cent of those who live south of the Sahara, are in a state of abject poverty. Of the 30 million people around the world infected with HIV/AIDS, 23 million live in sub-Saharan Africa.

How can we ignore the fact that Africa's foreign debt burden rose to $350 billion in 1998, amounting to 30 per cent of the value of exported goods and services, whereas African exports declined by 15 per cent in 1998 and direct foreign investment amounted to a mere 3 per cent of world trade. At the same time, official development assistance has fallen by 40 per cent since 1992 and now represents a mere 0.2 per cent of the gross national product of the developed countries, whereas the internationally agreed target is 0.7 per cent. Thus, Africa's prospects are by no means promising, since the economic growth rate foreseen for 1999 will probably not rise above 3 per cent, which, because of the rapid growth of our populations, is equivalent to zero growth in terms of gross national product per capita.

This picture should not, however, overshadow the praiseworthy efforts of many African countries — ours among them — to emerge from instability and crisis.

As the Secretary-General properly emphasized, democratic elections are becoming more common and good governance and the rule of law are gradually becoming an established fact, while judicial and legislative reforms are being actively undertaken in order to improve the competitiveness of African economies, reforms such as trade liberalization, privatization of State enterprises and the setting up of adequate infrastructures.

Morocco is contributing to this common endeavour for the development of Africa by devoting 95 per cent of its cooperation budget to finance projects and programmes in friendly African countries. It has also contributed to promoting a spirit of responsibility and good governance in African public institutions by hosting on two occasions, in 1994 and 1998, the African conference of civil service Ministers, whose results were endorsed by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Faced with the magnitude of the challenges to be met in Africa, particularly with regard to restoring peace and security and reducing poverty, the international community must give its full support to African efforts. Strengthening the African mechanism for conflict resolution, reducing the external debt and opening markets to African exports could and should radically improve the landscape with respect to security, the economy and the social situation, so long as they are the subject of concrete, resolute and coordinated action.

Morocco is convinced that only through genuine partnership, both national and international, can Africa achieve the 7 per cent growth rate regarded as necessary to considerably reduce poverty, according to the World Summit on Social Development.

The report of the Secretary-General accurately reflects the situation in our country. Democratization, liberalization, strengthening regional and subregional organizations for conflict resolution, restoring peace and security and dealing with the problems of arms and refugees are all tasks which deserve our attention and support.

As for the question of arms in Africa, particularly in regions of conflict, Morocco entirely supports the recommendations addressed to the Secretary-General by the Chairman of the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms that an international conference be held to step up and strengthen regional and international efforts to combat, prevent and eliminate the illicit trade in small arms in all its aspects. Everyone is aware that this trade

has contributed to intensifying and prolonging armed conflicts in Africa, and to further complicating peacekeeping efforts by impeding economic and social development in certain regions of the continent.

Furthermore, the challenge presented by small arms in Africa, in its humanitarian, security and development aspects, should encourage exporting countries to exercise stricter control over exports of such arms to countries in conflict or emerging from armed conflict. In this connection, my country appeals for the implementation of the Security Council resolutions establishing an embargo on weapons, and encourages the various moratoriums on the transfer of weapons to African countries where armed conflicts are raging.

In recent years Africa has felt frustrated at not receiving the same attention and treatment as areas outside the continent, when it has experienced conflicts which were often more serious, with victims numbered in the hundreds of thousands. Obviously, we attempt to settle our conflicts by our own means, but the international community is not giving us enough assistance. We will never be able to overcome the aftermath of the Great Lakes conflicts and the Somalia conflict, to cite just those two examples, if the international community does not help us.

The African approach to the settlement of conflicts necessarily presupposes that the donor countries support the African Mechanism for Conflict Resolution, by providing financial and material resources and training. The Secretary-General's approach to the resolution of conflicts in Africa appears to be very realistic, and Morocco gives it its full support. Nevertheless, we are unfortunately witnessing a lessening of the enthusiasm that led to the creation of this African Mechanism for Conflict Resolution because only one country so far has contributed to it, as the Secretary-General emphasized in his report.

Humanitarian assistance to the continent has also been particularly weak, particularly compared with the number of conflicts and the flows of refugees they provoke. Nothing can justify the international community's providing in 1999 only 50 per cent, and sometimes less than 25 per cent, of the necessary contributions to meet the humanitarian needs of Africa.

To maintain or restore peace in certain African regions, the Security Council has had to resort to sanctions regimes and peacekeeping operations. The Council's experience regarding sanctions as a means of pacification and maintaining peace and security has shown some immense shortcomings in this procedure and the seriousness of its impact at the humanitarian level. Sanctions as a means of persuasion or dissuasion should remain an exceptional procedure, resorted to by the Security Council when all other means of conflict resolution have been exhausted; that is, good offices, mediation, negotiation and arbitration. Therefore, sanctions should not be subjected to abstract rules and be applicable indefinitely without taking into account their impact on the civilian population, particularly without the benefit of all the necessary objective information.

I would here add a word about the concept of interference which has been bandied about recently. I appeal to all those who may speak about it or use it not to forget that the employment of this dangerous instrument deserves real reflection, and perhaps much deeper than we have been giving to the reform of the United Nations and even the restructuring of the Security Council, because it essentially calls into question our sovereignty, our cultures, our different civilizations and perhaps also our respective beliefs. Let us think about this very carefully together before taking any further steps in this direction.

In this regard, we welcome the laudable efforts the Secretary-General continues to make by quite properly encouraging the States, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations to give further thought both to this problem and to promoting sanctions when that is warranted, provided they are fair and as little damaging as possible.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of the United Arab Emirates. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Samhan (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, I join preceding speakers in congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and wish you every success. I also express our thanks and appreciation to my colleague, the Ambassador and representative of Namibia, for his guidance of the presidency of the Council last month and wish him every success also. We thank the Secretary-General for his valuable statement, and for his report and the recommendations it contains for the Security Council concerning the developing situation in Africa, particularly in respect of the need for peace, security and social and economic development.

The debate in the Security Council today reflects the keen interest of the international community in continuing its efforts to effect positive change in Africa by settling or containing the current regional and civil conflicts and meeting the humanitarian and development needs of its peoples and States.

The United Arab Emirates agrees with the Secretary-General's important analysis and recommendations contained in his progress report on the situation in Africa. However, it is concerned about the increasing trend in weapons acquisitions in conflicts and towards increasing power struggles between factions over power itself and over natural resources.

This in turn has led to infrastructure destruction and to an increase in the number of internally and externally displaced persons, especially women, children and the elderly. We therefore believe that the responsibility for addressing these situations and phenomena falls to the African countries themselves, especially responsibility for showing the political will to implement ceasefire measures, halt the bloodshed and respond to peaceful efforts to promote security and stability at the national and regional levels.

We call also upon the international community, especially the Security Council, to revitalize peacekeeping operations, preventive diplomacy and post-conflict peace-building. They must also implement the resolutions under international law on halting trade and trafficking in small arms and other *matériel* to areas of tension, and strengthen coordination and cooperation mechanisms between the United Nations and OAU.

We welcome the recommendations and resolutions of the recent OAU Summit in our sister State, Algeria, which expressed the desire and resolve of OAU leaders both to continue efforts towards a peaceful settlement to the current conflicts and to undertake the necessary reforms of the social and economic development institutions in their countries more comprehensively. We also urge the developed countries and regional and international development institutions to provide assistance, grants and loans — official and unofficial — to African countries and to cancel their external debts, especially those of the poorest countries, to help them improve their economic, social and human capacities. We urge also that foreign investment should be encouraged and that the African countries should be provided with the facilities and support they need to export their products to world markets without constraint.

The United Arab Emirates, which shares bonds of friendship, history and culture with the countries of Africa, is keen to strengthening mutual cooperation with many of those countries, especially in the field of exchange of information and of experts in all cultural, economic and social fields. The United Arab Emirates also provides all manner of support, loans and official and unofficial humanitarian and development assistance through the Abu Dhabi and other financial and development funds to which it contributes. Also, unofficial assistance from private sector projects and national charitable associations such as the Red Crescent and the Zayid charitable association all help enable the countries of Africa to deal with their current crises and implement major development projects, especially as part of plans to rehabilitate national economies in line with the requirements of globalization, change, trade and economic relations. Investments and assistance from the United Arab Emirates to Africa amount to over $5 billion.

We reiterate that the economic sanctions imposed on our sister country, Libya, must be lifted now that it has honoured all its obligations in respect of the Lockerbie issue.

In conclusion, we hope that the Security Council will come to a consensus on measures to promote international and regional cooperation to lead Africa into a new era in which it will play a more significant part in international relations and in which its peoples will enjoy security, peace, stability and development.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Arab Emirates for his kind words addressed to me and to my predecessor.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Comoros, His Excellency Mr. Souef Mohamed El-Amine. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. El-Amine (Comoros)(*spoke in French*): I am honoured to speak before this Council and to convey to you, Sir, my warm and sincere congratulations on your presidency of the Security Council. Your country has always lent an attentive ear to the problems faced by the African continent. Your initiative in convening this meeting of the Security Council to consider the situation in Africa is a good omen for us. We believe this to be a strong message from the Security Council to the international community on the eve of the third

millennium, and hope that this message will mark the end of an era of tragedy, conflict and poverty in Africa.

The commitment clearly expressed here in favour of the African continent cannot but encourage and strengthen the efforts already made by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and regional groups, and safeguard what has been achieved by African preventive diplomacy.

We have followed with great interest the exhaustive report presented by the Secretary-General; we also welcome and commend the tangible results obtained so far in the resolution of conflicts in Africa.

My country, the Islamic Federal Republic of Comoros, has not been spared the crises which are tearing apart children of the same family, the same region and the same country. That is why I wished to participate in this open and pragmatic discussion, to shed more light on the situation in the Comoros. The Secretary-General of the OAU and the representative of Algeria referred to this matter.

For more than two years this archipelago has been undergoing a unique crisis, which has challenged the very foundations of the State and threatened its unity and territorial integrity. One of its islands revolted, proclaiming sometimes that it would join the former colonial Power and sometimes that it was for independence, pure and simple. The Comorian State can in no way accept the Balkanization of the archipelago. When the matter was brought before the Organization of African Unity, it spared no effort to reach a peaceful, just and durable solution.

It must be emphasized that this unfortunate and disagreeable choice of the separatists was motivated by the precarious economic situation and by anxiety and despair about a gloomy and negative future, with an economic life dominated by an agricultural sector threatened by a slump in the sales of its products, public finances characterized by considerable deficits, a chronic deficit in the balance of payments, a very heavy external debt, salary arrears of sometimes more than six months per year, resource limitations that make it impossible for the Government to take proper charge of education and health in a country where the number of young people is more than 65 per cent of the population, widespread unemployment, and so on.

In other words, this was a legitimate problem to deal with, but the way it was done was unacceptable.

Thus, the problem is more economic than political, and any initiative to resolve it must necessarily take into account both aspects at once.

In this connection, we were pleased to welcome the special session on small island States, and we took due note of all the commitments made.

In the Comorian crisis, the mediation initiated by the OAU led to the organization of an inter-Comoros conference, which was held in Madagascar five months ago and which gave rise to enormous hopes for a happy outcome of this crisis. Agreements, which we believed to be an ideal framework to preserve the unity of the Comoros, were drawn up and placed before the parties involved in the crisis for signature.

To the surprise of all, the separatist delegation did not sign those agreements and asked for a delay in order to consult its base in Anjouan. The delay aroused the wrath of certain Grande Comore extremists, who rose up when the delegations returned to Moroni. The delaying tactics and the total abdication of the political authorities in the face of this situation only made the climate more and more tense and unbearable. The feelings of hatred and xenophobia towards our innocent brothers in Anjouan culminated in a mass exodus of our Anjouanese brothers to their island of origin.

Our country recently came close to a humanitarian disaster, but, fortunately, avoided it due to the actions of the national development army. A transition Government was immediately set up to establish peace and to lay solid foundations for a state of law, in the framework of the implementation of the Antananarivo agreements.

The Comorian Government endorsed the recommendations and the resolutions of the thirty-fifth summit of the OAU, held in Algiers, and is working feverishly to set up as soon as possible republican and democratic institutions. We urgently appeal to the international community to support this transparent process of institution-building.

I should like to pay tribute to the OAU, to the countries of the region — particularly South Africa — to France and to the entire international community for their solid commitment to helping Comorians recover their unity within their common borders. But now we have to go beyond defending principles and ask ourselves whether the deterioration of the crisis is not partly due to the complicity of separatists. The direct dialogue between

the powers in Moroni and the Anjouan group reflected the desire of the Comorian head of State to find in these meetings among Comorians the necessary energy to conclude a peace of the brave that would benefit and unite all. Dialogue continues to be our watchword.

The new authorities are convinced that an independent Anjouan has no future. The island will be only a tool in the service of various traffickers, a staging post for money-laundering and perhaps even a toxic waste depot controlled by the international mafia.

The economy of the region, security, peace and stability will thus be threatened. Thus, the efforts being made in Moroni and the good offices of the pan-African organization must be supported by the United Nations and the entire international community.

Can we now ascertain who has been financing the separatists for more than two years if Anjouan has no resources of its own? Who is providing the weapons? Who is maintaining the militias and the various armed factions? There are gray areas which need to be clarified if we want to avoid permanent instability in the Indian Ocean, which would cause lasting tensions.

The helping hand of the Comorian authorities, the flexibility in their desire to reach a final response respecting everyone's desires, the consolidation of peace, security and democratic freedoms and the oft-repeated affirmation of the desire to preserve the security and the rights of the Anjouanese in Grande Comore have not had any effect on the stubbornness of the separatists.

The State must be consolidated. The efforts to improve the situation and the economic and political restoration of the central authorities have to be supported. The international financial authorities and our various partners must agree to resume their dialogue with Moroni and apply themselves more to the task of breathing new life into the governance of public affairs, because it would be fatal if, on top of the secessionist crisis, the State were to be weakened. There would be no way to save the fragmented country, and the Comoros would therefore become a kind of Somalia, which would be a danger to the rest of the world.

I hope that the voice of reason will be heard and that together we can help the State of Comoros find the strength to defend the interests of its people.

The President: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Comoros for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Cuba. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba) *(spoke in Spanish)*: Having had the opportunity to listen to more than 40 preceding speakers, the great concern of the international community over the current and future situation in Africa is quite obvious.

However, it is also clear that beyond the rhetoric and the generally well-developed reports, there is a lack of practical action and of the necessary political will on the part of industrialized countries to find ways to resolve the mounting and pressing problems of an entire continent. Those problems are not limited to internal conflicts or conflicts between States, but rather relate primarily to the poverty, marginalization and underdevelopment in which African nations are mired. We observe with concern that the measures that are announced are weak and poorly structured, while the African continent urgently requires massive and multifaceted assistance.

As a result, the continuous and systematic attention to the complexities of the situation in Africa goes well beyond the purview of the Security Council. While not disregarding the merits of this debate, we are convinced that it is up to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other bodies to act as coordinating centres for designing and implementing long-term measures that would guarantee the security, stability and, above all, the economic and social development of Africa, all of which are inextricably linked.

The inescapable reality is that there are currently more armed conflicts taking place in Africa than in any other continent. More than one third of the African countries are now or have recently been in conflict situations. If we really want to find effective and lasting solutions we cannot overlook the fact that the roots of the current problems are found in the centuries of colonial exploitation during which African economies were looted and distorted in order to turn them into providers of natural resources, raw materials and cheap manpower at the cost of the annihilation and enslavement of tens of millions of people.

Nor can we overlook the fact that the current unjust and unsustainable international economic order continues to treat Africa as an economically undeveloped source of natural wealth, that serves the unsustainable consumption patterns of industrialized countries, among which are included the former colonizers.

Official development assistance currently represents only 0.23 per cent of the gross national product of developed countries, which is well below the already insufficient 0.7 per cent that they had promised. This affects African countries in particular.

In 1998, Africa received less than $5 billion in foreign direct investment, representing only 3 per cent of the world total. From a level of $4.9 billion in 1997, Africa's current account deficit rose to the dizzying height of $16 billion in 1998. Forty-four per cent of the African population, and more than 50 per cent of the population in sub-Saharan Africa, lives in conditions of absolute poverty. The debt burden of African countries rose to $350 billion in 1998, which is more than 300 per cent of the total value of goods and services exported from that continent.

We cannot hope to stop the cycle of violence in Africa without developing and implementing solutions to help achieve the sustainable development of its economies. This is particularly so in this era of neo-liberal globalization in which the marginalization of developing economies and of the most vulnerable populations and the gap between the underdeveloped South and the industrialized North continue to grow.

Not only are the financial and material resources devoted by the international community and the international financial institutions to combat the real causes of conflicts in Africa completely inadequate, but there is also insufficient emergency financial aid being devoted to the needs of the African continent.

To illustrate the humanitarian crises in many African countries, most of which are the result of conflicts, we simply need to point out that in 1998 more than 8 million of the approximately 22 million refugees in the world were to be found in Africa. While the media have covered Kosovo to the point of saturation, the serious conflicts in Africa have gone almost un-noticed. Similarly, while the Security Council acts expeditiously in certain situations because of the interests of some members, in the case of many African conflicts they simply issue sporadic statements, even as its own resolutions continue to be flagrantly violated. The case of Angola and UNITA's violations constitute the clearest example of this.

Such unequal attention is also reflected in the insufficient response to Africa's resource needs, a response that is much lower than in the case of other continents. It is therefore necessary for us to devote the necessary resources to this undertaking, which, as the Secretary-General says in his report, is both "reasonable and doable". (S/1999/1008, para. 103)

Very little coverage has been given to the silent but alarming crisis of malaria and AIDS in Africa. The continent does not have the minimal resources to deal with the 23 million cases of AIDS that have already been reported and that grow exponentially every day. Two out of every three people infected by HIV live in Africa. More than $250 billion would be required in order for every patient in Africa to receive the necessary treatment that victims in rich countries already receive. Where are those resources to come from if today African countries can barely afford to devote $10 per capita per year from their meagre budgets to health expenditures? It is for this reason that 9 out of 10 people in the world who die of AIDS are from the African continent.

For Cuba — a country with deep African roots and a profound vocation of solidarity — it is an unshirkable duty to continue to contribute, despite its economic difficulties and meagre resources, to the development of the brotherly peoples of Africa. Almost 1,400 Cuban workers are currently providing assistance in Africa in various important sectors. The integral health plan that Cuba is developing in Central America and the Caribbean has been extended and will continue to be extended to African countries without any economic benefit for our country. Roughly 200 Cuban doctors are now providing their services completely free of charge in a number of African countries, a figure that should grow in the immediate future and that does not include those who work under contract — among whom over 400 are to be found in villages in southern Africa. No fewer than 3,000 Cuban doctors are at the disposal of this tormented and exploited region of the world as part of the new programme of completely free services that we are developing in the poorest countries of Africa that have the most difficult health conditions. We urge the industrialized countries to cooperate by contributing medicine. The life of a child can very often be saved by administering in a timely way a vaccine that costs only pennies.

Similarly, we will promote the creation of free medical schools with Cuban doctors in order to ensure that health workers in the field are adequately trained. Hundreds of African students are taking courses in Cuba at various levels and about 24,000 African professionals and technicians have graduated from our centres and we have trained more than 5,000 students; these people now contribute directly to the economic development of their countries. Up to 1998, more than 1,100 African students had graduated in Cuba in the health sector alone.

Furthermore, in recent years more than 80,000 Cuban civilian workers have lent their services in Africa, including almost 25,000 doctors, dentists, nurses and general health workers.

Cuba is ready to contribute valuable human resources to any comprehensive and urgent health campaign in Africa.

Africa urgently needs the international community; but the international community also needs a stable, strong and prosperous Africa.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Swaziland. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Dlamini (Swaziland): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September, and especially on your convening of this debate on the situation in Africa.

Two years ago, we welcomed with relief the efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, contained in document S/1998/318. For this reason, we in Africa became optimistic that the world community, including the United Nations, would by now have fully devised appropriate structures to assist Africa in dealing effectively with the turbulent situations Africa continues to face.

To our dismay, however, efforts towards this end have not been easily forthcoming. Africa continues to be afflicted by a number of problems, such as wars, disease and poverty. Some of the problems facing Africa are inherent in colonial historical perspectives. It is for this reason that the people of Africa have been deprived continuously of their right to enjoy peace and security in their mother continent.

As a follow-up to the Secretary-General's initiative, we are pleased to note that concrete proposals for action, as outlined in his recent report (S/1999/1008), have been identified, particularly on support for regional and subregional initiatives in the areas of conflict prevention and the maintenance of peace. However, I must hasten to sound a word of caution here. These should not only remain on paper but should be implemented as and when necessity demands, for the continued hostilities in Africa dictate that the international community should come up with a new approach in order to ward off future civil strife. This is notwithstanding Africa's primary responsibility to resolve its own problems. Africa continues to count on a strong and genuine partnership with the international community towards the eradication of all root causes of conflicts and economic problems in Africa. Furthermore, we continue to count on the assistance of the United Nations and all our friends in tackling all of the humanitarian problems which linger and thus threaten Africa's survival.

We recently welcomed with open arms the ceasefire reached in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to end the conflict that has ravaged that country. We hail all the parties that have brought about the signing of the ceasefire agreement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly President Chiluba of Zambia, whose wisdom and diplomatic skills resulted in the signing of the ceasefire agreement. It is our fervent hope that all parties to the conflict will abide by the ceasefire agreement and be able to sit together and discuss ways and means to move forward in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The implementation process of the agreement remains crucial to the Congolese people and indeed to the entire African continent. In this regard, I wish to reiterate the call made by President Chiluba when he addressed the Council last week on the urgent need to send a peacekeeping force to the Democratic Republic of the Congo with a mandate to tackle the complex and unique problems in that country.

Furthermore, I wish to draw the attention of the Council to the fact that hundreds of thousands of Congolese people are today living as refugees in neighbouring countries. Within the country itself, a good number has been displaced. That situation alone demands that the international community should as a matter of priority make available adequate resources to enable the safe return of the Congolese people in their country.

While we share the joy of the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo over the ceasefire, a

peaceful situation in Angola has not been forthcoming. Reports of renewed fighting in some parts of the country are discouraging indeed. This is despite the joint efforts by the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and the Southern African Development Community to help peacefully resolve the conflict. The people of Angola have suffered enough. The time has come for the international community to condemn unreservedly the acts of destabilization by the rebels led by Jonas Savimbi and his failure to respect the Lusaka Protocol, which was meant to put an end to the hostilities and to start the peace process in that country.

The strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and Africa's regional organizations for the enhancement of Africa's peacekeeping capacity is a step in the right direction, save for the lack of resources to help carry out this exercise. In this regard we join the Secretary-General in appealing to Member States to generously make contributions to the trust fund set up in this connection so as to make effective the efforts of the Secretariat in building Africa's capacity in peacemaking. The opening of regional peacekeeping training centres in Africa will go a long way towards preparing military personnel in the continent to deal with the conflict situations which [illegible] engulf our continent.

I wish to end by emphasizing the shared responsibility the international community has with respect to the problems of Africa. Neglecting the continent, as it were, will not help but will continue to hinder the United Nations efforts in its quest to achieve peace and security throughout the world. Transforming Africa into a peaceful region is a commitment and a responsibility the international community cannot afford to easily abdicate.

We the people of Africa are concerned, as we continue to make statements here in the Council, as to whether the seed we are sowing here is falling on fertile ground. We have made many statements and appeals, both personally and through our representatives in the Security Council, but to our dismay the Council is moving at a tortoise's pace towards taking seriously what the plight of Africa is all about.

We know our problems in Africa, and we also know from where they emanated. And even though those countries have complicated our problems in Africa, Africa has never produced any weapons of war. But these wars which are fought today are fought by means of guns produced elsewhere, hence Africa is regarded by the rich nations as a market where all sorts of wars can be fought using arms from those countries.

I therefore appeal to the Council, as we end today's debate, to come up with a resolution stating what will be done to those members of the Council that continue to traffic in and sell the arms of war that have maimed the African population.

We never knew that after obtaining independence we would still continue to suffer.

We had hoped that we, like the people of any other region of the world, would be allowed to enjoy the fruits of our freedom. This Council — indeed, the United Nations — must search for answers to the question why Africa has even until today never known peace and has never enjoyed the fruits of independence. The answer lies with this Council, and we in Africa are waiting longingly to hear what steps this Council will take, and take soon.

I do have a question: if the Council were to vote today, at the end of this meeting, how many of the members of the Security Council would endorse forming and deploying a large, multinational force to control the conflicts in Africa, as they have done for other regions of the world? We do not hate being African: God made no mistake in making us African, but we want people to appreciate our being African, and help us because our development really was delayed by the accidents of colonial history, which is why, today, we are suffering these setbacks.

I hope that you will pardon me, Mr. President, for being emotional here. I am sending a strong message, which should be followed by a strong resolution to respond to the conflicts in Africa.

The President: I thank the representative of Swaziland for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Uruguay. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement now.

Mr. Pérez-Otermin (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I wish to congratulate you, Mr. President, for having convened this public debate today. Allowing the participation of countries like mine, which are not members of the Security Council, will help to enrich the work of this body on an issue that involves and affects us all.

My country applauds the firm commitment of the Security Council to raising the awareness of the international community about the question of Africa. Also, opening the debate to the participation of States that are not members of the Council increases the transparency of its work.

Uruguay welcomes with satisfaction and gratitude the detailed and timely report of the Secretary-General of 25 September last (S/1999/1008), which gives an account of the implementation of the well-timed recommendations contained in his report of 13 April 1998 (S/1998/318). We acknowledge with particular interest all the initiatives aimed at facilitating the peaceful resolution of disputes and in particular the creation by the Economic Community of West African States of a Mediation and Security Council to facilitate efforts to achieve understanding between parties in order to prevent and resolve conflicts in the region, respecting the principles of sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity, the fundamental principles of peaceful international coexistence.

As President Chiluba rightly pointed out at the Security Council meeting on 21 September (S/PV.4047), the United Nations has a role to play in the constant search for peace in Africa. We therefore congratulate the Council on the commendable measures that have been taken and which are set out in the report of the Secretary-General before us today. Security Council resolution 1209 (1998) on illicit arms flows in Africa is a necessary and timely first step in the efforts of the Organization in devoting greater attention to the prevention of conflicts.

Uruguay would also like here to underline the praiseworthy efforts that many African countries are making to promote peace and security in the region and achieve sustained economic growth, showing that African leaders are aware that the greatest efforts must come from Africans themselves.

We share the concern expressed here by a member of the Security Council regarding the need for greater foresight and precision in the content of the mandates. The Security Council must make greater efforts through the Secretariat to ensure, to the benefit of African countries, the greatest possible precision in mandates so that the proposed objectives are achieved and the necessary provisions to prevent failures such as those in Angola are put in place. Specifically, we believe that foresight is as important in determining the precise moment for the presence of a peace mission as it is in determining the right time for its withdrawal, thereby ensuring that when a mission ceases to exist peace will have been truly established on a solid and sustainable basis.

Uruguay has contributed troops to United Nations operations in Rwanda, Liberia, Mozambique and Angola. It is currently participating in the peace operations in Western Sahara, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone and, for over a year, it has been committed to supporting the peace process between Eritrea and Ethiopia, thereby demonstrating to the international community its very strong commitment to Africa — a commitment that we make despite our limited resources.

The more than 5,000 Uruguayan troops that have supported peace and economic and social development in Africa, and which will continue to do so in the future, together with the people of Uruguay as a whole, will continue to show solidarity with peace-building, democratization and the right to better living conditions for our African brothers and sisters.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Zambia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement now.

Mr. Kasanda (Zambia): My delegation joins with all those who have spoken before me to pay you a tribute, Mr. President, for the magnificent and most efficient manner in which you have handled the Council's business throughout the month of September. I should also like to congratulate your predecessor, the Ambassador of Namibia, for his impressive performance in conducting the Council's affairs in the month of August.

I should like to thank the Secretary-General for his detailed statement to the Council yesterday. In his briefing, he was candid and frank about the challenges that lie ahead in the common struggle to improve human conditions in Africa. In this, among other things, he struck a note of hope for the future, if only all of us, and in particular this Council, are prepared to play our part by living up to our commitments and obligations.

Conflict in Africa has had devastating consequences on the lives of the African people. From Angola to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, from Somalia to southern Sudan and from Sierra Leone to Ethiopia and Eritrea, the story of great human suffering is the same. Conflict has orphaned children. Other children have become child soldiers. Economic and social

infrastructures have been disrupted by war. Hundreds of thousands have been displaced within their countries' borders. Millions more are living as refugees in neighboring countries or are scattered elsewhere on the continent. This situation has had a negative impact on the economic and social fabric of host countries.

As several speakers in this debate have pointed out, however, there is a growing realization that Africans themselves should find solutions to these African problems. Through the efforts of our regional organization, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and subregional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), teething problems are beginning to be amenable to solution. Sierra Leone is one such case. Another is the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Here, the leaders of the SADC and the Central African regions, in cooperation with the OAU and the United Nations, have laid the foundations on which peace can be established in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These efforts, however, cannot succeed without the Security Council assuming its responsibilities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In his recent briefing for Security Council members on 21 September 1999, President Frederick Chiluba of Zambia, in his capacity as the SADC mediator on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, left on the Security Council table proposals that point the way forward in the search for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The institutions created under the Ceasefire Agreement are already in place, and a vacuum should not be allowed to develop and be filled by men of violence. The Security Council needs to act speedily and send to the Democratic Republic of the Congo a peacekeeping force with an appropriate mandate and of an appropriate size, based on assessed needs on the ground. The presence of peacekeepers will have a positive effect on many other aspects of the peace process, including building confidence among the population, thereby making the organization of a national political dialogue much easier.

It is my delegation's fervent hope and expectation that the Security Council will move quickly to take advantage of the Ceasefire Agreement, an Agreement that has been wholeheartedly supported by all the members of this body. Collective support for the Agreement should be extended to practical support for enforcement measures to bring peace to the Democratic Republic of the Congo quickly and without further bloodshed. We count on the support of the Security Council and the international community at large, just as we counted on them during the painstaking negotiations that led to the Ceasefire Agreement.

While efforts at finding solutions and preventing conflicts in Africa are gathering pace, the widespread availability of small arms continues to cause great concern. Conflicts in Africa are being exacerbated by the ruthless drive for fat profits on the part of international arms merchants. These greedy sharks must be stopped by timely international action. The uncontrolled sale of small arms has also contributed to undermining sanctions regimes wherever they have been put in place. A case in point is Angola. The loopholes in the sanctions regime against UNITA should be closed in order to cut the supply of arms to Savimbi's rebel movement and thereby diminish his capacity to wage war against his own people. In this regard, my delegation offers a special commendation to Ambassador Robert Fowler, Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 864 (1993) concerning the situation in Angola, for the excellent work the Committee is doing in that area.

We support stronger collaboration among African regional and subregional mechanisms for conflict management, resolution and prevention. In that connection, the Security Council should work assiduously to strengthen support for regional and subregional initiatives as well as to enhance coordination with those mechanisms in the areas of conflict prevention and the maintenance of peace and security in Africa and indeed the world over.

Africa has also taken deliberate steps to enhance democracy and good governance as well as respect for human rights, as part of a process of striving to achieve durable peace and sustainable development. Africa has determined that the only legitimate road to political power is through the ballot box. In this regard, and as many previous speakers have noted, African heads of State or Government, at their meeting in Algiers in July, took a fundamental decision, namely that they would in future deny recognition to leaders who assume political power through extra-constitutional means such as military coups. However, as we all know, democratic values and institutions do not thrive in conditions of widespread poverty, conflict and deprivation. The international community should assist Africa in all these areas in order to guarantee peace and development in the continent.

The President: I thank the representative of Zambia for the kind words he addressed to me and to my predecessor.

The next speaker is the representative of Uganda. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Semakula Kiwanuka (Uganda): Uganda welcomes this opportunity to participate in the Security Council's open debate on the progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations contained in his earlier report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. My delegation congratulates you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September, and on the initiative you have taken in facilitating this open debate.

My delegation entirely shares the views expressed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, and by the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and we associate ourselves also with the views expressed by the Permanent Representative of Algeria on behalf of the current Chairman of the OAU.

As the guns fell silent on 10 July 1999, when six heads of States parties to the conflict signed the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, which on 31 August 1999 was signed also by the Congolese Rally for Democracy, the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo entered a new phase. It was agreed that the former belligerents were now peacemakers.

Allow me to reaffirm that Uganda's interests have always been and still are in the need to ensure that there is total security in all parts of Uganda, in the protection of the lives and property of all Ugandans, and in the need to ensure stability in the Great Lakes region. This is because, as we have learned from bitter experience, instability in any neighboring country adversely affects our own security and economic development. It should be recalled that the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo had both internal and external dimensions. All the signatories to the Ceasefire Agreement recognized that a resolution of that conflict would have to address all those dimensions.

Uganda's position on the crisis reflects its efforts to pursue those interests. Uganda is and always has been strongly committed to seeking regional solutions to the problems of the Great Lakes region. I am therefore glad to report that Uganda is satisfied with the Agreement signed at Lusaka, because for the first time all the parties to the conflict have agreed on the future of their subregion. Having put their signatures on the Agreement, it is incumbent upon all parties, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to resist the temptation to engage in hostile and unnecessary propaganda.

I shall not repeat the five basic principles which were agreed on as the basis for a durable peace. Nevertheless, I need to point out that the signing of an agreement is, as we know, merely the beginning of a long process of peacemaking and peace-building. Consequently, the political Committee, of which Uganda is the Chair, as well as the Joint Military Commission, both of which were established by the Agreement, agreed to start their work. It is the view of the Uganda Government, a view shared by all the Heads of the States parties, that the peace process should not be held hostage by the internal divisions and minor disagreements between the RCD. Hence, the Committees, as I have said, have started their work.

But until certain measures are implemented as a matter of urgency, the peace Agreement remains fragile. Financial and logistical support is urgently called for in sufficient quantities to hold the peace together and to prevent those who may wish to take up guns again from doing so.

My delegation recognizes that the United Nations has a key role to play in the implementation of this Agreement. Uganda therefore welcomes the steps so far taken by the Secretary-General in dispatching military and civilian police to survey the situation. But, as I said earlier, this is not enough, because the situation is still fragile and demands much more than surveys. The fundamental requirements for the implementation of the Lusaka process are resources — financial and logistical — to facilitate the deployment of peacekeepers and the national dialogue which will lead to the process of democratization in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Finally I would like to inform you, Sir, and the Council that my Government is less than happy with responses from the Security Council when it comes to dealing with situations in Africa. We know the tragic happenings in Rwanda. The contrasts between what went on there and what happened in Kosovo and recently in East Timor are too glaring. Many of us Africans see the situation being worse than benign neglect.

This international body has the obligation to respond to and treat all conflicts with equal urgency and concrete actions of involvement. The Lusaka peace process demands quick action. The Security Council must play its role in safeguarding that peace, because delays in the implementation of the essential requirements of the Agreement can tempt the resumption of conflicts.

In conclusion, my delegation pays tribute to President Chiluba of Zambia for his tireless efforts, which resulted in the peace Agreement, which we are confident will pave the way for peace in our region.

The President: I thank the representative of Uganda for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Haque (Pakistan): The debate to review progress in the international community's efforts in advancing peace and sustainable development in Africa is timely. It can be argued that the Security Council is ranging far afield of its mandate in discussing the issue of sustainable development in Africa, which was squarely in the ambit of the work of the General Assembly. However, since this is one of the most important subjects facing the international community today, Pakistan has decided to participate in the debate.

Mr. Kofi Annan deserves our thanks and commendation for his pivotal role in highlighting the causes of conflict in Africa through a number of reports, as well as for his initiatives to address the dilemma of the "perpetual crisis" on the African continent.

The gravity of the situation is reflected in the fact that over 65 per cent of the issues currently under consideration by the Security Council relate to Africa. The causes of conflict in Africa are multifarious. Historical experiences, geographic conditions, stages of economic development, sets of public policies, patterns of internal and external interaction and ethnic tensions have influenced the dynamics of different conflicts in Africa.

However, the overriding factor responsible for the problems has been, and continues to be, the pervasive poverty on the continent. Agonizing, gnawing, ever expanding poverty which engulfs Africa does not lend itself to wide media coverage and therefore does not engage the attention of the international community. Extremes of poverty, deprivation and desperation breed frustration and violence. An abiding sense of injustice, exploited by those who are either motivated by idealism and outrage or seek wealth or power for themselves, engenders civil strife and political upheavals.

We agree with the Secretary-General that conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building cannot lead to durable peace unless a society can simultaneously move on the path of economic and social development.

The international community must therefore concentrate its efforts on poverty eradication in Africa, which remains amongst the poorest regions in the world. Without the serious pursuit of the objective of sustainable development, the possibilities of achieving durable solutions to conflicts in Africa will remain elusive. Financial and technological support is urgently required to strengthen human resource development and to build and enlarge essential infrastructure for the socio-economic development of Africa. Unfortunately, the international response has, so far, fallen short of expectations. The world must do much more, and must do it now. We share the view expressed by the Secretary-General that the so-called "Africa fatigue" is an affront to the idea of a caring international community.

Africa's poverty is exacerbated by constantly deteriorating terms of trade, falling commodity prices, increasing protectionism in developed countries, negative effects of structural adjustment arrangements, declining official development assistance and the pressures of debt servicing.

Let us look at some facts. Foreign debt and debt-servicing in Africa have risen to alarming levels. Debt service eats up most of the revenues of indebted countries and forces them to resort to short-term borrowing at high rates of interest merely to service their old debts. At present the total debt of Africa stands at around $350 billion. The African countries cannot pay back this debt through indigenous resources. The commitment of the West to official development assistance is also eroding and aid flows are drying up, thus compounding the problems.

The process of globalization has bypassed most countries of Africa and many other developing countries, which find themselves in a worse economic situation than ever before. For most developing countries the mantras of the market economy — liberalization, deregulation and privatization — have worked to their detriment. They have not led to increased production or exports. Nor have

they brought in foreign investment, which was expected to offset the decrease in official development assistance. Foreign investment is flowing to a limited number of countries only, and its benefits have been uneven and at times of dubious value.

In some cases large sums of money belonging to the African countries have been siphoned off to the Western banks by the rapacious elite of these countries. In other cases multinational corporations destroy the nascent local industries, proceed to establish monopolies and take out much more money than they bring in.

There is thus a major outflow of resources from the developing to the developed world. According to one account, for every dollar that comes into the developing countries, nine dollars are taken out of their economies. Thus, in some ways the developed economies are prospering at the expense of African and other developing countries.

Finally, the resources of the United Nations development programmes are constantly decreasing, and available resources are not, at times, being put to optimum use.

Africa is thus confronted with a hostile international economic climate in which exploitation of the weaker economies continues apace, notwithstanding protestations to the contrary, and in which conflicts are allowed to fester, since the international community averts its gaze and does not wish to accept responsibility.

Pakistan expresses its full solidarity with and support for the efforts of the African countries to find peaceful solutions to the conflicts in Africa, and also for their efforts for the economic and social development of their peoples. Pakistan looks upon Africa as a continent of the future. We are confident about the eventual rise of Africa. Relations with African countries are a priority area of our foreign policy.

Despite our financial difficulties, Pakistan maintains diplomatic missions in a large number of African countries and has been running a multifaceted technical-assistance programme for Africa since the early 1980s. Under this programme, we are extending training facilities to young professionals from African countries in diverse fields. We will continue to enhance the scope of this programme in the years ahead, within the limits of our resources.

On the issue of peacemaking in Africa, we note that important breakthroughs have been achieved this year in the search for negotiated solutions to the protracted internal conflicts in Sierra Leone and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as to the bilateral conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. We hope that the streamlining and strengthening of mediatory mechanisms, as well as the effective monitoring of illicit arms flows, will have positive effects on the efforts to promote stability and peace in Africa.

In Africa and elsewhere, random or planned violence against weak and vulnerable sections of society goes unreported, unnoticed and unchecked unless it is on a such a large scale that it can no longer be ignored. Developing respect for international humanitarian law and human rights is therefore essential for peace in the region. We note that there is a growing awareness of the need to uphold the universally recognized principles concerning respect for human life and dignity. More, however, needs to done to ensure strict adherence to international humanitarian norms by combatants in crisis situations, particularly for the protection of children, women, civilians and humanitarian workers.

The international community must address the underlying the causes of conflict in Africa and elsewhere. Addressing only the symptoms and trying to put out fires after they have been lit is an unproductive and wasteful exercise. Alleviating poverty, generating employment, providing essential services such as education, housing, medical care and clean drinking water, and, most importantly, promoting a shared stake in the progress and welfare of the country among the people — these are the most essential elements for peace and progress in Africa. A culture of peace cannot develop or prosper in a situation of despair and alienation. It requires a climate of hope and prospects for progress.

The people of Africa deserve and await a brighter future as the world approaches the new millennium. The international community must not fail them.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Nigeria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Gambari (Nigeria): May I at the outset join the many speakers before me in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and for organizing this very important public discussion. We are confident that under

your able leadership the deliberations of the Council will be conducted in a manner that will ensure justice and enhance the principles and purposes of the United Nations.

My delegation associates itself fully with the statements made earlier by the Organization of African Unity Secretary-General and by the representative of the current Chairman of our continental organization. I wish to thank the Secretary-General for his very articulate and thoughtful report (S/1999/1008) on the situation in Africa, as well as for the visionary recommendations contained therein. Well over a year ago, the Secretary-General outlined in an earlier report recommendations that, if pursued by the international community with adequate political will, would have advanced the course of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa beyond its current stage.

Indeed, there has never been a shortage of excellent analyses of the African condition, including those contained in the Secretary-General's report before us and in the many speeches we have heard throughout this debate. The missing link is the translation of the recommendations from those analyses into concrete actions at the national, subregional, regional and global levels. The world may listen to these debates in this hallowed Chamber, but ordinary Africans in the continent would prefer concrete actions that help them solve the many problems with which they are faced.

Africa is confronted with a proliferation of conflicts at a time when the region has little leverage on the larger international community to ensure the provision of necessary human, material, logistic and political resources to resolve them. Moreover, the decline in official development assistance and the lackluster response of the international community to the development agenda of Africa are additional negative factors. Yet, the relationship between peace and development is nowhere better illustrated than in Africa. The lack of sustainable development has indeed been linked directly to the proliferation and intensity of conflict situations and wars, which in turn have hampered and deflected development efforts in the continent.

The ability to resolve conflict and effective conflict management efforts in Africa would surely free resources presently consumed in mindless wars and redirect our energies towards development goals and objectives. The enabling environment for foreign private investment in the economy of Africa would also be enhanced. At present, regretfully, Africa is the continent with the smallest share of direct foreign private investment.

While we freely admit that there is a proliferation of conflicts in Africa, our region has also recorded success in trying to find solutions to a number of such conflicts. An example of such initiatives in Africa is the Liberian civil war, which was resolved after many years of fighting. Also, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) have been playing a positive role in the process of the restoration of peace and stability in Sierra Leone, which has culminated in the Lomé Peace Agreement.

The various peace initiatives and peacekeeping efforts, such as those of ECOMOG and individual countries like Nigeria, are predicated on the imperative of peace and stability for the development process. Our subregional efforts in the context of ECOWAS and ECOMOG therefore need to be given further impetus. It is neither fair nor wise to continue to expect a few countries to shoulder a disproportionate share of the burden of peace and security in the West African subregion. The Security Council must therefore assume its full responsibility for peace and security in Sierra Leone by, *inter alia*, authorizing without delay the deployment of up to six battalions for the new United Nations peacekeeping force for Sierra Leone proposed by the Secretary-General in his recent report on Sierra Leone.

We believe that conflict prevention holds the key to the maintenance of peace, security and stability in Africa and elsewhere in the world. However, it remains a big challenge, both for the United Nations and for regional organizations, such as the OAU and even ECOWAS. This is because, without absolute vigilance, the early signs of impending danger could easily escape notice. Hence, it is with this awareness that the United Nations and regional organizations must continue to fine-tune common indicators for early warning and engage in a joint training of staff in the field of conflict prevention. Moreover, my delegation is recommending that the Security Council fully endorse the decision made at the most recent regular summit of the OAU in Algiers to make the year 2000 the year of peace, security and stability in Africa. This Council should actively support the efforts of African leaders of considerable experience, stature and credibility to promote peace among African States in the areas of conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution.

A recurrent theme in this debate has been globalization, which is considered to be a twenty-first century imperative, with the market becoming truly global. As is well known, however, globalization has its benefits as well as its pitfalls. The pressing question for Africa is whether we are headed towards marginalization in the emerging global economic order. The danger signals for us in the continent are very clear. Africa is the least industrialized continent in the world and even the factories that are still being operated generally do so at less than 30 per cent of installed capacity.

Furthermore, Africa's share of private foreign investment continues to decline from the peak of $10 billion in 1982 to about $5 billion in 1996. According to 1995 figures, while Asia was the strongest magnet for private foreign investment at 18.8 per cent of regional gross domestic product, followed by Latin America at 13.9 per cent and Eastern Europe and the Arab world at 12.6 per cent, sub-Saharan Africa came last with only 7.7 per cent. The crushing external debt burden on African countries compounds the problem. Whereas in the late 1970s Africa's external debt stood at a mere $48.5 billion, the figure is now about $350 billion. Many countries in Africa, as the Council is aware, now spend far more on debt-servicing than they do on basic social services such as education and health.

The debt problem is therefore for Africa a desperate disease which requires a desperate cure through serious measures for debt relief and outright debt cancellation. Moreover, since 1992, Africa's exports and imports, as a share of total world trade, have declined from 4 per cent to about 2 per cent. Perhaps worst of all, it was recently pointed out by the World Bank President, Mr. Wolfensohn, that 37 per cent of Africa's private wealth is being held outside of Africa, whereas the comparable figure for Asia's share is 4 per cent and 17 per cent for Latin America. A significant share of Africa's private wealth held outside Africa is illegal capital flight. My President, Mr. Obasanjo, has proposed to the General Assembly at this session the idea — which we hope the United Nations will support — of negotiating and adopting an international convention to recover capital illegally siphoned out of our continent.

Africa must never consent to its own marginalization in global economic, financial and political matters. What is required of us is that we take advantage of some of the positive developments in the changing international political and economic order while taking measures to minimize their negative impact on our countries and on our peoples. We must diversify our economies and move the various subregional integration efforts and the African Economic Community — whose Treaty was signed in Abuja, the capital of my country, in 1991 — from rhetoric to reality. We must also intensify our efforts to create the enabling environment for external private investment. Furthermore, we must enthrone in our respective countries in Africa good governance and public accountability. Africa's hope and chances have been enhanced by recent positive developments in my own country, Nigeria, and the new South Africa. In general, the major challenges facing Africa, in our view, are conflict resolution and peace, sustainable development and enduring democratization. With help from the international community, we must not and will not fail in meeting these challenges as we come to the end of this millennium.

If we live in a truly interdependent world that is increasingly becoming a global village, Africans can legitimately ask the question: What is the world prepared to do in a sustained and committed manner to support the continent's own efforts at rebirth and regeneration? I share the belief that the era of separate destinies has run its course. No one country or region can go it alone or remain an island of peace and tranquility in the midst of disease, wars, poverty, human and environmental degradation and global chaos.

We in Africa will need the assistance of the international community based on the principle of reciprocal obligations and in the belief that peace and justice are truly indivisible. In this regard, let us consider the world's response to the recent crisis in Kosovo, in contrast with the response we have seen to the conflicts in Rwanda or Sierra Leone. In tackling the Kosovo refugee crisis, the international community responded by spending roughly $1.50 a day per refugee. The African refugees in Rwanda and Sierra Leone received the equivalent of ¢11 per head.

Let us also consider the fact that, in the aftermath of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military offensive in the Balkans, Western European countries and their allies readily pledged well over $2 billion for the reconstruction and rebuilding of Kosovo, even when it was widely estimated that only about $500 million are needed for the task. In Sierra Leone, where Nigeria, a developing country, has been spending more than $1 million a day to support its troops in ECOMOG for the past three years — in addition to the estimated $4 billion

spent in Liberia since 1990 — the same enthusiasm for the Kosovo-type of financial support is sadly lacking.

When the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, recently visited Sierra Leone, she remarked that there had been far more loss of life there than in Kosovo and that there was therefore a greater need for a more compassionate and humane response from the world. Recently, Stephen Lewis, the Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was quoted as saying that

> "It is morally repugnant that the West is prepared to spend $40 billion to fight a war in the Balkans and less than 1 per cent of that to save the lives of tens of millions in Africa."

These observations raise some deeply troubling moral questions, which the United Nations and the international community must address as we enter the twenty-first century.

Permit me to end this statement on a personal note, Mr. President, since this is the last time that I will address the Security Council in my present capacity as Ambassador and Permanent Representative of my country. When I assumed office as the Permanent Representative of Nigeria, almost a decade ago, at the tail end of the cold war, the Security Council was reticent in responding to African conflicts. It took us, for example, about five months to get Liberia on the agenda of the Security Council. As my tenure now comes to an end, the agenda of the Security Council is dominated by African issues.

The peoples and Governments of African countries commend the interest and concern of the Security Council and the international community as a whole. All they ask for now from the Security Council is to match its words with deeds and to apply a single standard, and not a continuing double standard, when responding to conflicts in Africa compared with the response from the Security Council to conflicts in other regions of the world. And, in so doing, the Security Council would then be fulfilling its Charter obligation to assume responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security everywhere.

The President: I thank the representative of Nigeria for his kind words addressed to me. Before inviting him to resume his seat at the side of the Council chamber, I call on the representative of Canada.

Mr. Fowler (Canada): Thank you very much, Mr. President, for allowing me to speak for a few seconds about the enormous contribution that Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari has made to our Organization and a couple of years ago to this Council.

As Professor Gambari has just said, he has served for 10 years in this Organization. I learned only today that he will be leaving us in a few weeks, and I thought that as this is likely the last time he will address the Council it behooves us to note the occasion.

The conclusion of this extremely important debate on Africa is a very fitting occasion to note the extremely important contribution that Ambassador Gambari has made to the Council and the Organization, and indeed, if I may so, the contribution he has made to Nigeria and to the African continent. His tenure here as Ambassador of Nigeria has covered a tumultuous period in the history of his great nation. Throughout that time Ambassador Gambari has represented nearly a quarter of the population of Africa with enormous grace, poise and quiet effectiveness.

It is also appropriate that in the course of this debate, in which we have spent a lot of time talking about peacekeeping, we should recall that Ambassador Gambari, as Chairman of the United Nations Peacekeeping Committee, the C-34, has made steadfast efforts to streamline, modernize and enlarge the United Nations peacekeeping performance. Indeed, the C-34 now includes almost half the membership of this Organization, and much of the credit for that modernization goes very directly to him.

In conclusion, speaking personally — but I am confident that I am expressing a view which could easily find consensus within this Council, which is no mean feat, and indeed well beyond — I think we can all wish Ambassador Gambari well in whatever he chooses to do. We will all of us miss enormously his wise counsel, an example of which we heard just a few moments ago.

Mr. Burleigh (United States of America): I enthusiastically second what Ambassador Fowler has just said about Ambassador Gambari and his many contributions. Aside from identifying ourselves with all the comments and assessments that Ambassador Fowler made, I should like to add that Ambassador Gambari's hard-headed pragmatism and directness have been very much appreciated by my delegation over and through many different issues, including most recently the

discussions about how this Council and my Government, for example, will engage on the question of Sierra Leone and the presence of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) there. I want to wish him well, and I am sure colleagues will join me in that. We will miss him.

The President: There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.